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**BACKSTAGE
AT
STRATFORD**

by Joan Ganong

*with twelve pages
of photographs of
the ninth season*



TORONTO

LONGMANS CANADA

L I M I T E D

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To
Paul and
Michael
together

*Not just to the Paul
Scofield and the Michael
Langham whose names if
we are fortunate will blaze
from many more mar-
quees; but to the two united
in this season. To the bow
and to the hand which
bends the bow.*

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

In the year 1953 there arose in the city of Stratford, Ontario, a tent. In it, Tyrone Guthrie, with Alec Guinness as his star, staged a Shakespearean tumult of such power, vitality, and visual excitement that a new theatrical tradition was born.

Within four years, the Stratford Shakespearean Festival had outgrown its tent. In 1957 the permanent theatre was opened. The tent, and the stage within it, had been departures in theatrical design. The theatre which grew from them remains unique among the theatres of the world.

In the first nine years of its existence, 1,360,968 people have come to the Stratford Festival; yet the measure of the vitality of this theatre is not alone that its audiences are growing larger, but that they are growing *younger*, every year.

Design alone could not account for the phenomenal success of Stratford. The quality of its Company, of its productions, matter fully as much as the stage on which they are displayed. To attain such quality, rare artistic insight had to be there backstage; a policy and conviction held by its two Artistic Directors, Tyrone Guthrie, who began it, and Michael Langham, who has reigned there since 1956. The tent and the great beginnings all were Guthrie's; but the theatre now bears the print of Langham's mind.

My own interest in the artistry behind Stratford's plays was incessantly piqued by the questions asked of me, as a Canadian who presumably should know, in theatrical circles abroad. There, this theatre is already a legend. I had written articles on Stratford, from the outside view, but to most of these queries I had no answer. They wanted to know more of how the plays were mounted. So did I.

My friends include many who work at Stratford. One fortunate

night at a dinner-party in London, my demands of them about the building of the plays grew so ferocious that, in self-defence, someone concocted the notion that I should see a season for myself. Inquiries were set afoot, and it proved that there was an opening for a free-lance writer in the Publicity Department. I flew across and worked at the theatre during the rehearsal season that year, 1960, and returned the next.

This book is a chance by-product of those seasons. When I had left, I found there was a tale I wished to tell. . . .

1

THE first rehearsal of Stratford's 1961 season was almost eerie to those involved in it.

It was a weirdness which none of us mentioned. Even the cause was not named aloud. It was too large, too important, and while the affairs of the Festival were being held in suspense, it didn't seem the moment to joggle Fate's elbow, and demand of the lady that she tell us of her plans.

The chief members of the Company were assembled, save for Paul Scofield, Joy Parker, and Zoe Caldwell, yet to arrive from England. The apprentices and lesser actors would appear weeks later, but the main Company was here, a company of actors familiar with Stratford's stage, most of them familiar with the ways of rehearsal season, and well able to judge of the strange tension there; actors familiar with Stratford, and with the disciplines of Stratford, and, therefore, doing the part of the job which lay within their care.

They gathered for the opening rehearsal and for the photocall before it. They posed as directed, moved as directed, yet the pictures had a listless air. The lack was not a lack of will; it was a lack of spirit.

The Company had gathered, but Michael was not there.

Michael Langham, Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival, and director of two of this year's plays, was ill in England.

Illness had struck late, dangerously—it might yet prove to be disastrously—late. The feat of directing two major plays, and those two of Shakespeare's most difficult, to open within two days of one another, is one to test the strongest constitution as well as the firmest will; yet Michael's two plays must both be directed by Michael. This year, there was no visible way around that.

The notion that no man is indispensable, a military phrase of wishful thinking dribbled over into civilian life, is *not* true in the world of the arts. The talents and insight over which a man reigns are his

own, and they may be indispensable, indispensable to the effect promised a public on a particular opening night. You may be able to replace the soldier, not the artist; and Michael Langham is an artist of first rank.

But there were also contractual reasons.

For years, Stratford had been trying to get the most dazzling among the younger classical actors in England. This year, at last, Paul Scofield had consented to come. His presence on Stratford's stage would mark his introduction to the New World, and a reputation firmly established on England's stages would be retested on a new continent. This is not a move for any actor, let alone a great one, to make lightly, and part of the promise which brought Paul Scofield to Stratford was the chance to work beneath the trained brilliance of Michael Langham's mind and eye. Under his contract, Scofield was to be directed only by Langham. Alternates could not be rung in, without danger of losing a star.

What decisions were being made in England between Paul Scofield and Michael Langham—old friends, since the days when Michael was courting the pert and petite Helen Burns, now Mrs. Michael Langham, at Stratford-upon-Avon, and actress Helen was living in the Scofields' house—were not known at Stratford, but well known was the fact that part of the decision might still be made by Fate.

So, the pre-season opened silently, in the knowledge that doing one's best, while waiting, was all that could be done to set the season off.

Unwilling hero of this situation was George McCowan, director of the third play, *Henry VIII*.

George is a Stratford veteran himself, at a young age. He has acted on its stage, and, once previously, directed; and his wife, Frances Hyland, has been one of the Festival's brightest stars. George's previous directorial stint there had been when, with Jean Gascon of Montreal, he co-directed *Othello*; but his *Henry VIII* of this year would be the first occasion on which a Canadian director would carry the full weight of a play on Canada's most important, the continent's most demanding, stage.

Henry VIII is not the easiest play in the world to stage. Accurate to history, it includes some odd dramatic problems. Since it is not the Charles Laughton classic, with Henry flinging bones to the dogs

after dinner, and since it does not concern itself with more than two of his six wives, there is time for a lot of political palaver to enter in. There are also, however, three brilliant roles, those of Queen Katharine, Cardinal Wolsey, and the Duke of Buckingham (all of whom get knocked off, in inverse order), to highlight it and give it form around the central figure of the king.

A play like this depends heavily upon its design, its pace, and its major performances. With able actors in the main roles, the performances are apt to round out late; at best, they will not hit their height till the play opens, so early rehearsal turns heavily to blocking and pacing the play.

("How would you describe 'blocking'?" I once asked Leo Ciceri.

"You know what blocking is!"

"Of course I know what blocking is! I also know how to tie a bow knot. But I can't describe it!"

"It's moving bodies about."

"Thank you. We'll have to do better than that." I'd chosen Leo to ask, because Leo *can* do better.

"All right. Try this. Blocking is the early establishment of the spatial and physical relationships between characters onstage, which will reflect their psychological relationships to add power and meaning to specific scenes. Will that do?" It will have to, for I can't top it.)

George, a skilled director, had planned the progress of his rehearsals weeks in advance, only to arrive at Stratford and discover that, instead of running one-third of the rehearsals, with *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost* filling their share of the days, he had a full company to occupy full time. *Henry* rehearsals, morning, afternoon and evening, were forced upon him immediately, with knowledge that, when the other two plays joined the repertory, he might of necessity have to lose out on rehearsal time. So much for advance preparation! He had to force his actors into steady rehearsal before there was time for them to so much as learn their lines, and with the knowledge that the bulk of his work must be done two months before the play opened, and then the tension and the interest sustained until the final weeks' work.

Not a proposition to bring joy to any director, but if George had doubts he did not allow them to show. He rushed into full rehearsal ahead of all his planning. He and his *Henry* held the stage alone.

Whether he could have done this trick with an ordinary company presents a question, but Stratford's Company are not ordinary in the least.

The Stratford Festival does not have one continuing company. Each year's actors are contracted after the plays are chosen, and each season is treated as a separate entity. Many of the actors who have been on its stage, however, have returned again and again, so that there is a nucleus of powerful actors who are accustomed to the stage, and necessarily they tend to dominate the group. Good Shakespearean actors are not so easily come by that a theatre is apt to want to let them disappear.

Their domination in this case was all to the good, because they took in the situation of one missing director, and one play to rehearse, at first mention, and simply settled down to do the job to be done. Consequently, they went along with George, and failed to sit in the aisles and fret about Michael; and it was by their efforts that the pre-season was begun.

Most of these regular actors at Stratford are men and women of stature, in and of themselves. A classical actor has to have considerable backbone, along with that mystic quality called talent (one not often named aloud in the theatre); and if he is a major member of a classical company as demanding as that of Stratford, he has self-discipline, too. Temperament, among such actors as these, shows in an outburst of emotional power, or a stillness arising from emotional tension; it is not a careless trifling with the basics of their trade.

At the Festival, the stars are usually in two plays, the middle company in two or sometimes three, and the extras and apprentices in all three. Said extras and apprentices are by no means *just* extras, however. They are younger or newer actors and actresses in training, frequently ones with considerable credit elsewhere, who come willingly and eagerly to Stratford for what they will learn, in even the smaller roles.

Centring his *Henry* production, George McCowan had the good fortune to have four of Stratford's stalwarts, each an actor successful in his own right, and each familiar with this stage.

Douglas Campbell, starred as Henry VIII, is a Stratford regular, both as actor and director. When offered the role of Henry, he was initially appalled. He was so obvious for the part that he feared it

would look too much like type casting, and he strode around frowning Scots frowns, and bashing darts into the dart board with increase of venom, for a day or two.

So strong was the casting, however, that the powers who cast held to their convictions, and for good reason. The role of Henry is not simple. It demands power, technique, an ability to hold stage centre, and an inner understanding of the qualities it takes to be a ruling king. These, in addition to the healthy ferocity and the dimensions, Douglas Campbell has.

There chances to be character, in plentiful amounts, in this rugged Scot. Character, wit and a quick, often bumptious, intelligence, which takes itself out in boisterous impatience at times, but is disciplined into balanced power when necessary. Dougie has been known to go his own way in performance, and heaven help the weak director who might quail before his wit; but Dougie is a part of Stratford, and Stratford was in trouble, so in his able hands, Henry was safe.

Queen Katharine, Kate Reid; an actress of tremendous, glowing power onstage, and of tremendous, hyperbolic doubts, off. Kate, who has no temperamental difficulties whatever in the sense of interference with others—she's the warmest-hearted creature who ever ranged around a stage—yet entertains herself in early rehearsal by a fine flurry of doubts, amounting to despair.

Her long, low wail of "But I'll never make it!", her more anguished plea of "What the hell am I doing? Does anybody know?" are desolate, desperate, and quite true to her convictions at the moment. They are the convictions which drive her to the passionate work which she puts into a performance. That doubt which bedevils her, and her vital ability to overcome it, are part of Kate Reid's acting; but a part which, in this dilemma, she was willing (briefly) to forego. She sailed into *Henry* rehearsals as serenely as the new-comers; and they, of course, for the first few days, are very serene indeed.

Douglas Rain, Cardinal Wolsey, is a quiet, able actor, so self-possessed about his business life around the theatre that it is hard to realize, seeing him offstage, the weight and colour of his talents. Only on rare occasions is he raised to bursts of passionate conviction, and those convictions don't concern his private dignity. Only among his friends do the natural wit and hilarious humour find their set-

ting; the talent for mimicry, the liking for laughter, the delight which can set him to laughing until tears stand in his eyes.

But neither flash of fire nor lift of laughter disturbs the even tenor of Douglas Rain's rehearsal ways. There, he is an able man and gifted. His business tools are words and emotion, but he reserves them for the stage. Nobody ever thought of worrying over Wolsey; nobody ever does worry about Doug Rain. His usual calmless paid an extra dividend this year, for it helped to steady the Company as a whole. They needed no outside aid, nor would have accepted any; but his was not from outside. Douglas Rain has played every season at the Festival since it began.

Jack Creley, the Duke of Buckingham; one of the most improbable and brightest additions to the cast of any Shakespearean play. Jack—a revue artist, a TV star, a song-dance-and-joke man, who lives his own life, by choice, with a comic flair. A man quite willing to over-dress and overdo for the fun he gets out of it; but it is fun, real fun, and the man who does it has sensitivity, strength, and a happy heart.

He also happens to have the mastery of timing which brilliant comedians must have, a voice which can change to the tragic when he wishes, and a conviction of the moral value of mental and physical labour at his business which leaves most of his newer colleagues exhausted and aghast.

As Buckingham, he was playing a straight role, solemn and tragic. His style would be curbed to it by George McCowan; but faced with emergency, Jack also curbed himself. Blessed with a nature which finds most moments, all people, inviting, Jack also has a heart to to know the sadness which underlies life's joke. I know of no actor who more fully sensed the situation which Michael would face in his late arrival, nor who more fully understood the qualities which it would take for him to rise to it.

George McCowan swung the Company into rehearsal.

Props, Wardrobe, Carpentry, Office, worked steadily around them, in this, the world's only theatre where the whole theatrical enterprise is gathered beneath one roof.

It is also the only theatre which dares the astounding achievement of mounting three major productions to open on three consecutive nights. Other theatres bring their major works into repertory at intervals. Stratford's Festival opens its three, bang, bang, bang. As a

result, they compete against each other, even for the critics; compete against each other, in a land where no other competition touches them at all.

In the theatre itself, it is a happy competition, urgent, driving toward excellence, asking the impossible and sometimes gaining it. If the reviewers choose between the plays after we mount them, why, Stratford itself has chosen to give all three of its best.

Three plays; *Coriolanus*, *Henry VIII*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, to open in that order. Three plays, and only *Henry* set up to rehearse.

The Company was gathered. The backstage departments were running at full capacity. Over two hundred of us ranged about the theatre. Yet, with notices for one play on the callboards, with one play discussed over coffee in the green-room, with one play in rehearsal, the theatre still seemed empty. Some touch of vitality was missing.

Nobody discussed the reason it felt empty. There was unspoken understanding that we would not name it. The Company just went about their business, but their devotion to that business, the inner discipline which now sustained them, was largely the creation of the one who was not present.

Henry on the callboard, a play in the theatre, the pre-season opened. But Michael was not there.

2

PROPS and Wardrobe, who mount the plays, and Tanya Moiseiwitsch and Brian Jackson, who designed them, had been in residence for weeks. The Company gather in late April, but the production departments had been filling since the turn of the year.

Both Props and Wardrobe are carried out on a lavish scale at Stratford, but it is a lavishness curbed and directed by a firm artistic sense. The conviction for quality which underlies it is part of the theatre which aids this theatre's growth.

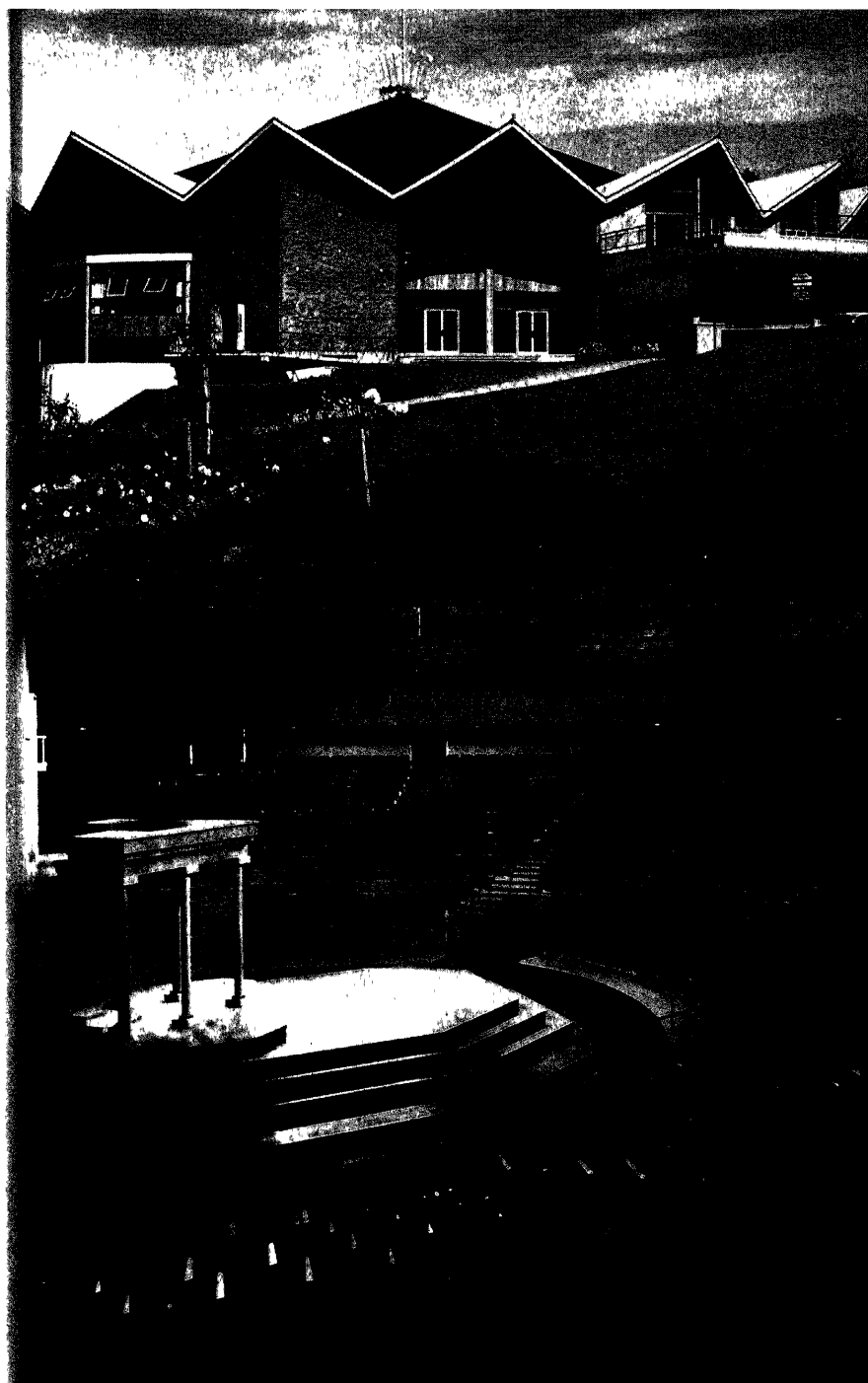
A great deal has been written about Stratford's scenery-less stage—a great deal too much. It is an apron stage, which projects into the audience and on which major scenic changes cannot possibly be made; but some of that which has been written about it gives an erroneous idea of starkness.

Actually, a less bare stage was probably never seen. Not only does a luxuriant stream of costumes sweep across it, but the set pieces which are whirled on and off by the actors—carpets, tables, chairs, candelabra, ladders—give an incessantly changing colour and dimension, while banners and standards can supply it with a scenic vitality which cannot be surpassed upon any proscenium stage.

The whisking on and off of these set pieces and movables, as part of the action of the play, is one of the basic directorial feats of Stratford, and the creation of costumes and props which will stand up to

*The theatre with the crowned and fluted roof
that replaced Stratford's tent.*

*Designed by Tanya Moiseiwitsch, "Stratford's
stage is unique."*





the intense stares of an audience a few feet, and, indeed, often only inches, away, is part of the art of Props and Wardrobe.

Everything onstage at Stratford is made at Stratford, with one or two small exceptions, and even those are remade there.

Shoes and boots, for example, are made by a company in Toronto, but redesigned, highlighted and buckled in Wardrobe's own workrooms. Gloves are brought in from outside, but dyed in the workshops, and the gauntlets, embroidery, crosses and jewels added there. Sword blades are made at a nearby smithy, the hilts added and ornamented in the Property workrooms. An exception, this year, was made for the swords for *Coriolanus*, imported from England and tested first by the fencing master there. This exception had the laudable object of keeping Paul Scofield and John Colicos alive through the season, so it cannot be looked upon as frivolous expense.

Some of the uniforms for *Coriolanus* this year were basically made by military tailors, but remade, ornamented, and broken down in the Festival workshops. ("Broken down" means painted and highlighted.) The armour, breastplates, and helmets were made in Properties' own workshops.

With these minor exceptions, the two hundred and eleven costumes for the three productions (plus those for the later operetta and the Canadian play) are all made here. To do the making the Festival imports and gathers in unto itself an extraordinarily talented and temperamental group of experts, artists in their own right, passionately anxious to turn out these costumes to the highest standards in the world, and occasionally passionate about a few other matters, also. The mood of Wardrobe and Props is one of the fascinations of the theatre, and John Hayes, Production Manager, often has to play upon that mood as if it were a musical instrument.

*Tanya Moiseiwitsch with Barbara Mattingly
and a few of the sketches for the costumes of
Love's Labour's Lost.*

*Brian Jackson shows Douglas Campbell the
Tudor opulence of the sleeves for one of
Henry VIII's costumes.*

The results are worth it.

The Wardrobe group, numbering fourteen at the beginning of February and rising before opening to twenty-six, are crammed together under terrific pressure for twenty weeks, during most of which they work up to eighteen hours a day. This is not exaggeration; it is most unsimple fact. In the case of Ivan Alderman, Jane Greenwood, Pat Scott, and Barbara Mattingly, it is, if anything, understatement. They are all cutters. All have worked in the great theatres of England. All become so compulsively concerned about the costumes they are making that they fling their hearts, souls, minds and talents into them with blind abandon; work voluntarily hours that nobody could possibly demand from them; produce magnificent costumes; and, periodically, consider demolishing any part of the world which interferes with them. Interferences may be partially listed as Staff, Office, Publicity, Opening Nights, Actors, and, occasionally, the designers themselves.

It is not a sharp, virulent intent at demolition; it is just one which is thoughtfully and articulately mulled over at the cutting tables now and then. Once in a while, it bursts out in sharp and equally articulate notes on the doors and bulletin boards. These are accepted as part of the set-up, even by those who set them aside, and the power of temperament in Wardrobe, springing as it does from a combination of extravagant energies and utter exhaustion, is accepted by the rest of the theatre, all of whom are Wardrobe's blind admirers. Ask any actor, and I mean any, what he thinks of the costumes he wears at Stratford, and you will hear admiration and awe, admixed with a breathless respect.

They really are worth it.

Tanya keeps insisting that writing about detail of the costumes may take away their glamour. I take a diametrically opposed viewpoint, for I've seen them through construction, and they are so much more glamorous than any illusion could be, far away, close up, or inside out, that they don't need protection. The fact outdoes the fancy; and fully to appreciate a Stratford costume, you really ought to see it inside out!

The hands which make them are skilled, the standards are high, and the Festival supplies their artists with the best materials for their art.

Michael's absence, and indeed that harrowing, weighted question of when Michael would come, if Michael could come, had the effect of stalling some of the work on his two plays. Designer and director work together in the final detail, and although the main designs for *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, both by Tanya Moiseiwitsch, had been set six months before, and the sketches were now completed, there were final details which needed the O.K. of conference with him. Some even needed a word with Paul Scofield.

As a result, just as *Henry VIII* was flung into unrestrained rehearsal, Wardrobe and Props were inundated with *Henry* jobs. It was well that they did gain this brief advantage, for *Henry* was by far the heaviest production of the year. It had ninety-nine costumes—and this means costumes complete with bonnets, plumes, tunics, gloves, coats, hose, shoes, jewels, swords, daggers, each of which must make its first appearance in a sketch on the designer's board; and these were costumes of that richness and intricacy which pleased the hearty senses of King Hal in the sixteenth century, and absolutely transport Brian Jackson's in the twentieth.

There is a Thing between Brian Jackson and Henry VIII.

Since Brian was this year sporting a beard, squarish of cut, and is himself sturdy, active and energetic, there was even a visual Thing. The rapport between them, however, began long before this date; it began when a costume for Henry helped Brian on his way in his career.

Brian Jackson is Stratford's youngest and newest designer.

He came to Canada originally, in 1956, from the Old Vic in London, to take charge of the Property Department at the Stratford Festival. He later designed their operas, and last year designed set and costumes for *HMS Pinafore* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The *Dream* was his first full work for the Stratford stage.

It was also one of the bonniest ever to burst into bloom there. It was set in Elizabethan costume, and I think that Brian must have Tudor blood. The involved detail, the opulence of material, which delighted those lively monarchs and, therefore, their courtiers, suit Brian to a T-square. He not only likes the slashed, cut, jewelled, embroidered, braided and embossed effects, but he likes to create them himself. Nobody at the Festival works more fabulous hours than Brian, and the extra three or four spent at his desk in the

designers' office, beyond the sixteen that he intended to be there anyway, are usually spent to form a delicate crown or jewel of his own design, which has so appealed to him that he has lingered, for the chance to complete it with his own hand.

One of the enchanting sights of Stratford, reserved for those of the theatre and never to be caught by any visitor, is Brian Jackson at 2 A.M., tearing through the theatre, eyes bright with excitement, saying, "Do you have a minute? Just a minute? Come and see!" It is always worth breaking off what one is doing and accepting this invitation, for down in the designers' office one will be shown a fabulous jewel, adangle from the creator's hand, or a tiny crown for a lovely queen, balanced on the back of it, or a rich extravaganza of embroidery, three-dimensional and bejewelled, pinned out on his drawing-board, while the one who made it stands, in a rumpled shirt with the sleeves pushed up, looking at his creation, laughing at it with that laughter which is pleasure as much as amusement, and which rises not alone as sound, but as a deeper glow in tired eyes.

He is quite a sight, this Brian, when he lights up with excitement, for it is joy in his business, in the materials of his art, in the chance to do fully that which he can do well, quite as much as it is pride in that which he has done. Indeed, it is even joy in the life which has brought him to this minute. Those of us who are haled so willingly into the designers' office at these times—haled in for companionship in a bright moment, quite as much as for our admiration—always gain from them.

So does someone else; for these 2 A.M. scenes of artistic exuberance often have another witness and participant. Lois, Brian's slender and beautiful young wife, her honey-gold hair brushed sleekly back, is apt to be sitting on the floor of the designers' office, in slacks and a sweater, and making the combination look distinguished; her back braced against a table leg, hands busily stringing beads or wiring lace for some of his froufrou, from which she glances up in brief appreciation of his excitement, then back at the work in hand. Lois is adept at a variety of detail. She needs to be. There are no casual visitors backstage in the pre-season, and a designer in the heat of creation will commandeer any and all help that he can get.

Lois is able, popular, and ornamental—very ornamental! It is generally agreed around the theatre that there is no lovelier evidence

of Brian Jackson's artistic good taste and good fortune than the gal who is Mrs. Brian J.

This other Thing of the heart, however, the one between Brian and Henry VIII, began at a decidedly earlier date.

Brian was born in England, in Bournemouth, thirty-two years ago, and, as a matter of course, left school at fourteen to help out at home. Not only were there no artists in his family or in his immediate circle, but there was not even a clear acquaintance with art. It was not a thought in young Brian's head in any form whatsoever, but it must have been lurking in his heart.

The first discovery of it was disconcerting.

Still in his teens, he had gone to work in a furniture store, and suddenly discovered that furniture has design. This was, for him, a genuine discovery. He had never heard of it, or talked of it, or thought of it, but it began to fascinate him. It obviously had design, and principles behind it, and they were principles he did not know. Brian found himself so excited about it that he was in a daily dither of anxiety to see the new furniture uncrated, simply so that he could judge of it.

This odd compulsion eventually grew so demanding that it drove him to the unprecedented, and for him world-shaking, step of enrolling in an art school, for night classes. He had no particular objective at this point, save to satisfy this longing, plus a faint, improbable dream of a chance to study interior decorating some day, a dream so distant that he scarcely gave it thought.

While he was discovering that art existed, and working during his days to spend his nights at a drawing-board, a teacher in the school discovered him. Her name is Dorothy Thick, affectionately known as Thicky, and she is one of the topics on which Brian's swift enthusiasms rise.

"I owe her more than just the art," he says. "She taught me a lot and I learned a lot on my own with her. I had a bit of a chip on my shoulder, and she helped me to get rid of that. She gave me confidence. That's about the biggest gift anyone has for giving, and I'm not just pleased, but proud, to say that she was my teacher, is my friend."

She also saw that Brian's particular talents, with all their vigorous power, should be turned towards theatre, and that at a time when

he scarcely knew theatre existed. He discovered it, through her, and turned to stage design.

After his service in the armed forces, he returned to the night school, but Miss Thick persuaded him he should go full time. This was a luxury beyond the scope of young Brian's imagination, but the principal of the school proved more imaginative. Brian was asked if he could raise the money to pay his fees and his living expenses for one year, provided a scholarship were arranged for the other two.

"I suspect it was sort of a test of me," says Brian, smiling in warm reminiscence of a turning-point in his life. "I didn't know that, then. I didn't think I could do it; I didn't even think I deserved it! It seemed too wonderful to be true. I walked about all over the city that night, excited, and then I decided I must try."

Bournemouth is full of hotels, and to raise the money Brian went to work dish-washing in every hour he could spare from his job. He still exists on five hours' sleep when art is his object, and long hours were no hazard to him then. He washed dishes all over Bournemouth, worked and did nothing but work, but he raised his money and he went to the school.

To work full time on art was, as he factually puts it, heaven. To be rewarded for it was something more than that; but rewarded he was. At term's end, the treasurer called him in, returned his fees for the first term, and gave him a three-year scholarship. In the elation of the moment, one of the things which Brian did with the unexpected riches was dash out and buy the most luxurious materials he could lay his hands on, to carry out, as a class project, his own design for a costume for Henry VIII. Wine velvet and rose and grey brocade, superb in design, splendid in detail, and his own; the work of his mind and of his hand.

A picture of Brian in that costume ornamented the wall behind his drawing-board briefly this summer, but he doesn't have the costume now. It served its purpose. At year's end, the principal decided the Bournemouth Art College had taught him all it could teach him, and that the rest of the scholarship could be used at the Old Vic school—if they would take him. So off to London Brian trotted with his recommendations, and, as proof, the Henry costume in a box beneath his arm.

He was accepted.

The Old Vic school; three years working at the Old Vic; a journey to Canada to work at a new Stratford, and a swift knowledge that he wished to be a Canadian; returns to Stratford, Props and designing; success, and marriage to a Stratford girl. Brian is Canadian now, as he loves to announce—but then, he loves most of living, and his vital excitement, controlled, gives power to his art.

Henry VIII retained a special attraction for him. The chance to design it for Stratford's stage, on a forty-thousand-dollar costume budget, with the facilities of the Festival's workrooms to aid him—it was enough to make him creatively dizzy, and the dizziness expressed itself in a blinding, glorious whirl of colour for the stage.

When concern for Michael's absence and the need to get everything else done before his return suddenly turned the building powers of Stratford primarily to his play, Brian simply went hog-wild. The basic designs were not open to change, nor did he wish to change them, but every time he could get an extra set of skilled hands at his disposal there would be some extra embroidery, new jewels, or delicate detail, not carelessly added, but highlighting the extravagant beauty of an extravagant court.

There is nothing delicate about this *Henry*. The designs are firm, heavy, masculine and proud, and during the days when Wardrobe was turned exclusively to it, the cutting-rooms themselves became an uproar of colour and sheen.

It's the furriest play ever staged at Stratford. And furs, silks, brocades, velvets, suedes, tumbled across the tables and moved beneath the whirring needles of the sewing machines. Embossed designs were created, painted, highlighted. Jewels came up from Fred Nihda's jeweller's work-bench: buttons, gobbets, lace points, medallions, rings, chains of state and office, crucifixes for a cardinal and a queen—jewels for the feather on a king's beret, jewels to give glitter to a bishop's mitre, jewels for a king to send as gift to woo a queen.

It reached the point of such gorgeous outpourings of craftsmanship, design and detail that those of us in the theatre were actually conducting private tours of others down to Wardrobe, to stand awe-struck before King Henry's sleeve. One sleeve, hanging all by itself in a plastic bag in Wardrobe, but with such cuttings and slashings and furrings and braidings and jewellings, with such extravagant

beauty and so all-round satisfying, that one sleeve, itself, could raise all one's school-time thoughts of Henry to a newly educated high. I used to get to Henry via Holbein; I now reach him through recollection of that sleeve!

If one sleeve could do this to us, you may do your own imagining as to what ninety-nine full costumes could do. Cardinal Wolsey's robe was cut from thirty yards of scarlet silk, and it didn't even need Douglas Rain in it to make one's heart go boom.

Brian was having himself a ball, and so was the rest of the theatre, and that display down in Wardrobe was the brightest thing in those pre-Michael days. The rehearsals weren't far enough along to be lively, but this was present proof of the season to come.

I don't know how the cutters, the assistants, Brian or Lois lived through it, but if they had given out it would have been a glorious way to die. I think we would have sacrificed a few of them, gladly, for the results they were giving; and certainly none of them stinted the energy they gave. Just being close to the fine outpourings of sheer labour Wardrobe gives in the pre-season is an enlightenment on the scope of human endurance. The results are stunning; and so is the work which makes them so.

Highlighting the days, and more, the nights, were Brian's sharp bursts of excitement, and the glittering creations that excitement made.

When Queen Katharine swept onto the stage in the midnight-blue velvet-and-ermine-sleeved gown, with the jewelled panel on the shot-silk skirt ashimmer, it always brought a gasp from you who saw. We had gasped earlier. The costume came from Brian's pen and imagination; and that embossed and jewelled panel we saw first pinned on Brian's drawing-board, his powerful hands at work on it with delicate precision.

During this time, Tanya's costumes were by no means being neglected; it was merely that the accent had been turned toward *Henry*. Tanya was quietly busy—her quietness a most melodious quiet, for she lightens her private thoughts with private hums—but she was caught, as were the rest of the theatre, in the knowledge that the season was waiting for Michael.

Brian was waiting for no one. This was his labour of love.

Incidentally, about that costume of his, after knocking the Old

Vic door ajar for him, it won him two first prizes at fancy-dress balls, and then was sold to a theatrical costumer.

“It certainly paid its way,” says Brian affectionately.

It did so also in the extra lilt that it added to our *Henry’s* designs.

3....

IVAN had given Paul Scofield a marvellous advance press among us. He had explained to us that he was possessed.

This was practically the only advance press that Paul Scofield had. We did not see fit to issue it to the news services. There were moments when we wished we could.

Those of the theatre who pop back and forth across the ocean (and classical theatre is international theatre now, with jumps over the ocean as natural as the contracting for a new role) were familiar with and dazzled by Paul Scofield's activities onstage, yet it was an oddly impersonal knowledge of him, admiration intense, but for individual roles, with small indication of the man who stood behind them.

To actors, the man behind the roles matters a very great deal, and especially if he is to lead a company in which they are acting. A certain amount of querying among friends in the profession had elicited the advance information that Scofield was easy to work with, a technician of the first order, that his private life was private, yet with nothing in it which could not stand the most brilliant light of public gaze, had he and his wife, Joy Parker, not wished for privacy. There are not even any errant rumours clinging about Paul Scofield's name, and that in a profession where the lives of actors are quite open knowledge and open for comment among themselves.

That he was a star of the brightest magnitude was well known—an actors' actor, who chanced to be the public's actor, too!—and the power of his roles, plus their sheer technical perfection, left every actor who had seen him his helpless admirer, and every actor who had not, curious to do so. This unanimity is also unusual, and it created a sense of unreality about a man who was certainly real enough, for he was coming here to work.

This sense of admiration, professional admiration, sometimes grew a trifle overpowering, and I used to while away the stillness of

those pre-Michael, pre-Paul, waiting days by whipping up a bit of froth in the green-room. This could always be done by remarking idly to a table of actors, "But the thing I like about Paul Scofield is that he's so gorgeous to look at, on a stage."

This intrusion of *matinée*-audience comment always stirred them to the depths of their excitable beings.

Leo Ciceri, six foot two of remarkable manhood, well able to hypnotize a *matinée* audience himself, always took this as a slur on Paul Scofield's professionalism. There would result an intense and genuinely brilliant dissertation on the skill with which the man mastered his roles, which seemed to indicate that the man who mastered them was incidental to the job. I would have carried these furores further, except that I did not choose to push Leo to a breakdown. His admiration, incidentally, is a fair gauge, for he has played several of Scofield's roles. Scofield played the original twins in *Ring Around the Moon*, in England; Leo played the same roles for the CBC in 1961. Yet Leo, who is not exactly blindly modest about his own abilities, was readier to speak for Paul Scofield's than any actor who had not stood similar tests.

Professional approval of one actor—indeed, in this case, of all actors who had seen him—for another, is pleasant to view; but it still did not tell us what he would be like to work with; and as those who had never left Canada had never even watched him, there was an onstage interest exactly balanced by a backstage curiosity.

The office view of Paul Scofield was practically frantic. He was, after all, the star concerning whom information had to be released to a public who knew nothing of him at all, and there was no information to release to that public. The only book about him, *Paul Scofield* by J. C. Trewin, treats of his work, and thereby emerges as a downright monotonous list of successes, in Stratford-upon-Avon, in London, in Moscow. It may be fine as considered critical comment, and it may be fine as an explanation of why the Queen saw fit to award this young actor a C.B.E.; but to hand that book, or excerpts therefrom, to the news-reading public of the *New World* would be like publishing the Latin on a man's diploma in lieu of publicity.

Not that it wasn't true; but there was no contrast. The whole darned story was simply too good to be true. The fact that it was

true was no help at all, for this is an era when contrast, colour, and conflict are accepted as the three c's of news reporting. We had on our hands an unknown quantity of infinite value, and there was not one useful thing we could say about the man.

From England, the legendary Mr. Scofield added to the general confusion by sending us portrait photographs which would do nicely for any banker, or to explain how the junior vice-president managed to marry the boss's daughter, but which, for an actor, were not of much value. They demonstrated his willingness to be obediently polite to the photographer, but told little about the man who had been photographed. We kept saying to one another, loudly, what an "interesting" face it was; while I used to stand staring at it, my arms crossed on top of the file cases, wondering how in hades that man had ever managed to create the roles I'd seen him play.

The other pictures that he sent in advance by request were also more than a bit unhelpful. The trouble was, he is such a thorough actor that no two of the pictures looked to be the same man. They were old, they were young, they were strong, they were vague, they were defiant; they were splendid pictures of roles, but Paul Scofield was not there. We could prove the man's abilities at creating differences, indefinitely; but we could not demonstrate the man at all.

As the press, always kind to Stratford, was curious, they found our vagueness most exceeding hard to bear. So did we, I may add. There were feverish conferences about how to answer outright questions, concluded with the wistful hope that clarity could be added, as soon as Michael might be there.

But the best advance description still was Ivan's. It had been delivered the summer before, when the thought of Scofield's coming had been but a green-room rumour bruited about.

Ivan Alderman is chief cutter for the men's wardrobe. Often dubbed Ivan the Terrible, and doing his best to live up to the title, he is an extraordinary character in his own right. Lined of face, maliciously brilliant of mind, he has a wiry, energetic body, topped by a strange and unforgettable head. His hands are skilled, his eye observant, his experience most horrendously varied, and his mind filled with a mystic knowledge of the macabre and the occult. Ivan doesn't need to tell ghost stories; his ordinary day-to-day chitchat will raise the hair on your head.

Ivan is deep through the heart. He is one of the kindest men that I have ever known, in the active form of kindness that shows itself in perceptive and memorable deeds. Passive kindness, the sort which means tolerance or putting up with another sweetly, Ivan Alderman does not have at all. I'm in some doubt that he's ever heard of its existence. He not only doesn't suffer fools gladly, he doesn't suffer them at all. As the variations of theatrical nature include a few which are spectacularly foolish, Ivan is not universally loved, but he is universally treated with a wise respect.

Among the strong and the able, however, and with those who possess either humour or wit, Ivan holds a place which cannot be usurped by any other. Rare parties at which he is present are apt to turn into routs, for as *raconteur* he can play upon the chord of laughter so unmercifully that his aching and overmastered auditors are actually gasping for release.

Parties at which he is not present are usually brightened by quotations of Ivan's latest (and not very *bons*) *mots*. Most brilliant expositor of these is Dougie Rain, one of Ivan's greatest fans, who can take off Ivan's accent and delivery superbly and does so with that hilarious emulation which is the truest admiration that a talented actor can give. It is typical, incidentally, of both Dougie and Ivan, that his favourite stories are those in which Ivan has taken him down a peg.

One of Ivan's asides which added delirium to this season is worth recording. (Most of them won't record, because they depend on his own timing and delivery.)

One of the seamstresses, brought in for part time, was a very earnest sort, not theatrical at all. I suspect she found the theatrical types a trifle trying; at any rate, she strove to help them out.

This isolated lady prowled down to the main Wardrobe rooms one day in search of ribbons, and there found Ivan exercising his nature in articulate search for shears which had run away from him. He grows oratorical on these occasions, and it is rumoured that the shears creep back to him, from fright. This is part of the texture of life in Wardrobe, a fact of which the normal new-comer was unaware. She tried to help him find his shears.

He explained that she needn't; no, really, she mustn't; that he always lost them; that he lost them every day. That it was a part of

his method of doing business.

"Every day?" asked the helpful seamstress.

"Sometimes twice a day," agreed Ivan. "Must be poltergeist activity."

Then she said—awestruck witnesses have verified it, because in Wardrobe this was an occasion to note—then she said, very troubled, "In that case, if you really lose them daily, don't you think you ought to consult a psychiatrist?"

Strong men and nerveless women nearly fainted; and Ivan, for once, was struck dumb.

Nobody, but nobody, thought this state was apt to last, but it did cause chuckles for an hour. Then, it would have been forgotten, save for the *envoi*, which we heard later. Toni Carignan brought it up from Wardrobe, at tea-time. She worked in another room in Wardrobe and hadn't heard the initial story; but the girl next to her was the one who had tried to help Ivan out.

"Ivan said the oddest thing to-day," said Toni. "He just walked in and stood in front of that new girl, staring. Then he shook his head, and sighed. All he said was, 'So many mediums, and so few spirits!' That was all, and then he walked away."

"So many mediums, and so few spirits." The phrase became a part of the season at Stratford. It was even added to Dougie Rain's repertoire.

But, about the Scofield story.

One day last year, Ivan was whiling away an unexpectedly free five minutes in the almost empty green-room, and five free minutes are four too many for Ivan's taste. At the opposite end of a long table sat Peter Donat, deeply engrossed in a game of postal chess. Peter's serenity began to be a bit much for Ivan. Peter's serenity—when present—is so serene that it's quite a state to cope with, and it's never at brighter aura than when he's playing chess. I suspect he was too calm, too handsome, and too occupied, for Ivan. Anyway, out of the blue, Ivan demanded of him, "Have you ever known an actor who was possessed?"

"Possessed?" repeated Peter, forgetting the queen's bishop and looking around to see if Ivan might be addressing someone else.

"Possessed," repeated Ivan equably. He had asked Peter, and did not propose to let him get away.

"What do you mean, possessed?" inquired Peter, who has a logical mind which doesn't intend to stray.

"I mean possessed," said Ivan, as if explaining to a backward infant. "An actor whose body is taken over, possessed by a different spirit, the second he steps on a stage."

I have always thought that for a moment Peter considered a new profession; but blood was too much for him (he is Robert Donat's nephew), so he grinned good naturedly and said, "No. No, I haven't. Have you?" In the pause dramatic which followed, while Ivan readied his master bolt, he had time to add that he didn't think he'd known anyone who was possessed, either on or offstage, at least, not consciously. He seemed to be willing to have life continue that way.

Ivan ignored this, to answer the earlier question.

"Yes, I have known one," said Ivan. "Only one. Paul Scofield."

If he wanted Peter's attention, he had it. Scofield's name, among actors, is not one to be lightly tossed around.

"Is possessed by another spirit!" exclaimed Peter, with the kind of incredulous yell which suggests that a thing not only isn't, but that it mustn't be, true.

"Yes. I've worked with him," said Ivan comfortably, aware that those at other tables had by then turned to stare. "He must be. It's the only explanation. He can laugh and chat backstage, turn to speak with you one sentence before he enters—no preparing, no mood, no tension, just Paul Scofield, talking—then turn on his heel and stride on, and as the stage lights strike him, there he is, the other character, in full."

"But a lot of actors—" began Peter, knowing very well they don't.

"Not that way," said Ivan. "Not like that. There's tension before or after a big emotional scene. They'll come off and have to work out of it a bit. You know actors as well as I do. The tension's part of their acting, it's something the powerful ones can't seem to do without. But Paul! And it isn't as if he can't turn on that emotion onstage; he can. Full force. He can outdo the best of them in clear emotion. But still that casual sunniness and good nature one minute before and one minute after. It's just as if while onstage his body was possessed by another spirit. It has to be. And probably it is."

This story was shortly afterward raised to uproarious extremes, both by Ivan's quotability and by the fact that Paul Scofield was announced to star that year. Of course, the story grew and flourished, but flourished as the Ivanism that it was.

I asked Ivan about it one day that spring, and he laughed—visual laughter, the tension of muscle and interest of eye which mark laughter in Ivan far more clearly than any audible sound.

His tales are tales for a moment. He has no interest in defending them when they're done; yet, this time, after laughing, he sobered.

"You'll see Paul. Let me know what you think about him. You'll see what I meant by the story. There's nobody like him, no one. There's nobody in theatre, anywhere, who is like Paul, at all."

I was stilled and faintly excited by the rare event of hearing Ivan express a real admiration. This carried more weight than those impersonal judgments which streaked through conversations in the green-room, and it somehow rendered quite negligible Publicity's discontent.

Going up the stairs, I paused on the landing by the double windows, which look down over the playing-fields to the river beyond, and I recognized that the second had held a curious excitement. I tried to identify it. It wasn't just Ivan's voice, though Ivan has a voice of beautiful conviction which can give rare backing to those few he will back. It was a quality beyond that, it was a quality added, added to the picture of the man.

And then I laughed aloud, and went on my way rejoicing. I knew what had been added.

Paul Scofield, from being a name and a legend, now was human.

Ivan was the only man in the theatre who automatically called him Paul.

4

IT WAS less than two weeks after the Company had gathered, but when everyone was *Henry*-weary—especially George McCowan, the director thereof—that Michael Langham arrived.

On the day he came, I heard two separate people refer to him as Mr. Langham; I don't mean in direct conversation with him, where it often happens, but in speaking about him, where it doesn't happen at all. He is, to the theatre, Michael, or Michael Langham. The "Michael" is a title of affection. Actors' voices know how to express their convictions, and their opinion of Michael speaks itself in the melodious syllables of his name.

But that name is not "Mr. Langham". The thought that he could have dwindled into being just a Mr. Langham was enough to make the hearers' blood run cold.

It had been suspected, then assumed, for days that he would be coming, but just when it became certain was difficult to say. It was known in the offices along the back of the building, but not a great deal of information gushes forth from there. It isn't precisely secrecy, but the group who are part of the resident staff of Stratford—Vic Polley, Administrative Director; Tom Patterson, Founder and Planning Consultant; Jack Karr, Publicity Director; John Hayes, Production Manager; Bruce MacDonald, Box Office; Bruce Swerdfager, Theatre Manager; Norman Freeman, House Manager—and their families form a compact unit among themselves. They are in one another's company all winter, separated from the city of Stratford by the fact that their business is theatre; and, inevitably, they pick up a form of casual communication. When the great rush of outsiders—Wardrobe, Props, Company, and extra staff—flood in for the pre-season, this group is thrown back upon itself.

There is not the slightest sense of cliquishness; on the contrary, there is an eager welcome. But the private modes of communication, the familiar language, never quite enlarge to embrace the new

arrivals. I doubt very much that those who stay have any idea how sparse is the information they choose to proffer to those who come merely for the season. They know, and I think they assume a general knowledge; yet even the Company, to whom Michael's coming was of most importance, knew nothing for certain until the day he arrived. I speak with exasperated certainty upon this, because my tenuous connection with the office kept me under a barrage of questionings.

In order to ward off panic, we had been blithely informing the newspapers that Michael's coming was certain. Just what day that quoted optimism became fact, and gained a retroactive honesty, no one could tell. It was simply noised about that he was coming, with still no certainty that he could do both plays.

Even Leon Major, his assistant, had small news about him, for Leon was an outsider, an outsider from 'way outside.

One of Canada's most vigorous young directors, Leon is talented, energetic, with such a surge of animal energy, such a blaze of eye, such a sense of intensity, that it's easy to have it compel one into believing that these vigorous spirits are all he has to give. I might add they'd be enough; but there happens to be more. He has a swatch of degrees I shan't bother quoting, but talks as if he picked up his education on the street.

Leon is dark, sturdy, graceful, with a powerful hand which has to restrain its gestures, and he is wildly intent and articulate wherever the subject under discussion is any of the many practical forms of art. Playful among his peers, but socially extremely shy, it is hard to tell where Leon Major's going, but going somewhere Leon definitely is.

This ambling source of kinetic energy Michael Langham had discovered the previous year, when Leon came out to direct a studio production of a Canadian play for Stratford. As part of his policy of bringing Canadians into the organization, and part of his private enthusiasm for energy in art, Michael had imported Leon this year as his personal assistant, the first to hold this newly created job.

There was something amusing during these first days about the thought of this amiable giant with his repressed verve assisting Michael; the two so different in type. I am not sure that Leon found it amusing. He was stuck in a ridiculous position through these days.

Two plays were pending on which he would assist, yet he could make no decisions. He did not even really know what his job was to be—with a man for whom he had never worked. He had met him; but Michael in a meeting, and Michael in action, are two quite different men. Green-room rumour readily confirmed this; even enlarged upon it. So, Leon leashed his energies, lounged around with the other unemployed in the green-room, and dangled a cigarette from his lip corner till the ashes crumbled, while he thought long, intense and darkling thoughts.

The others among the unemployed were Eleanor Stuart and John Colicos.

Eleanor Stuart, to play Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, was seldom present, as her stirring Scots blood keeps her from being a lounging type. It kept her occupied and preoccupied elsewhere to such extent that she became, briefly, known as Miss Stuart, which is about as great an indication of respectful distance as theatrical parlance can supply. If the distance had been characteristic, it would have been a disaster; but in this case it proved to be only geographical.

John Colicos, however, was another matter entirely. He wasn't just waiting two weeks to get started at Stratford; John had been waiting half a dozen years.

Of course, "John Colicos waiting" is really a contradiction in terms. The volcanic force which this young man can turn on at will under stage lights, takes itself out in offstage moments in restless energy. He's a successful actor, Canadian, of whom the newspapers always choose to mention that he played King Lear at the Old Vic at the age of twenty-two. I toss that in purely to prove I've done my homework, which also includes a quire of stuff about starring roles in the U.S.A.

It is a waste of time to trace out the tortuous channels of why he had not been at Stratford before. It is his natural estate, and he belongs there, and by this time he has made Stratford's stage his own.

Pacing through the corridors and green-room, dark-haired, bold-eyed, strong and unique of feature, staring at those actors who were in rehearsal with an angry envy which verged on outright rudeness, John Colicos was still but a potential force. Starred in *Love's Labour's Lost* as Berowne, in *Coriolanus* as Tullus Aufidius, his efforts were confined to Langham's plays, and no one awaited the director's com-

ing more impatiently than he.

We knew he was coming; he came; someone walked into the green-room and said, "Mr. Langham has flown over," and at the name we shivered, and closed the windows, and tried to raise our spirits by walking briskly about.

"How is he?" asked someone of someone; I don't remember who. I just remember the anxiety which shot the atmosphere.

Vic Polley said he was fine. John Hayes said he was fine. Jack Karr said he was fine. Bruce MacDonald didn't say anything, which is just like Bruce. We were all toying with the thought of having nervous breakdowns, so instead we sought out the man who'd know, Tom Patterson.

Tom, who dreamed this theatre and then helped build it, still has a sense of his theatre which nobody else attains. He has an instinct toward its personnel and atmosphere which is beyond understanding, it is almost inspiration; just as his first idea of this theatre was inspiration with no "almost" to qualify.

So Tom looked out of the window of the theatre he had dreamed and helped build, and said, "I just don't know." Then he added, "I hope he'll get through the season. We'll have to help him. But Michael isn't an easy man to help."

We always know what Tom means when he speaks, so then we knew where we stood.

The notices went up on the rehearsal call boards, "Company to meet with Mr. Langham," and John Colicos took a new bright lease on life. Rehearsal calls were posted for *Love's Labour's Lost*, and Leon Major stopped smoking and began to stride about.

A different life, but cautious, quivered through the theatre; but still his office stood empty, and Michael had not come.

Ten A.M., and the meeting, and the actors pouring down to the green-room thereafter, strangely united and very strangely subdued.

"How is he?" I asked, but only mute glances answered, till Butch Blake announced firmly, "He'll be all right. He's been a very sick man, but Michael will get through." Bill Needles nodded. It was determination they were stating, conviction, not a knowledge. Beyond that, they said nothing; but there was new decision there.

He'd said the usual things to them, behaved in the usual fashion; but actors, good actors, have sensitive eyes and observant, and there

had been much there which they had seen.

What it was they could not state or would not tell me, but united they knew it. United, a company close in upon themselves.

I went into the office musing, thinking about them, half forgetting the one who had plunged them into this earnest state. I dropped some books on my desk, turned to go along the office toward Box Office—the route we always took when we wanted cheering, for the advance sales, even then, would brighten any day.

To get there, I had to pass Michael's newly dusted office. At his door I met him face to face.

He's a stunning young man, this Michael Langham, slender, compact, with a natural grace of action and the trained grace of courtesy; brown of hair, hazel-green of eye; entirely English in his reserve and manner, entirely Old World in his social understatement, entirely Michael in his artistic force and skill.

He was turning in the doorway when he saw me, and it was a weary turn. Manner bred in the bone kept him from slumping, but it was clearly an effort to stand erect. It was clearly an effort to give the courtesies of greeting, yet he gave them. His eyes widened in welcome and the wanness was completely dissipated in a smile.

Michael's smiles come slowly but they come straight from the heart; and with them there comes a gaze which is, for such a strong man, singularly questioning and singularly sweet. Now, all the warmth and depth of greeting he could give came flashing, for one moment. Then, he turned away. Even moments had grown precious. One was all he had to give.

One was all I needed.

Now I knew why the Company was staggered, and that it wasn't depression. Now, I knew why I'd sensed that an adventure was afoot. Slighter, lighter, from his immediate illness, than he had been; weary from effort, which he must now conserve, Michael's eyes had yet blazed forth his private spirit. We were about to witness a man's fight, with himself, for us.

And suddenly I remembered this man's early history; that the very illness he'd suffered came from his young years in a German prison camp. Out of that gruelling disaster he'd saved a radiant spirit and formed an enduring strength to give it weight. And Michael, the man, became suddenly wildly important—not just to

the theatre, to which he is always important, but as a test of himself, and therefore, of us.

I went right home and read through *Coriolanus*, and I tried to read all *Love's Labour's Lost* but I had to skip a swatch of that. Two of Shakespeare's most difficult plays—not the obvious great ones—and our season to rise or fall on those.

I know a bit of directing, more of Michael, but wondered how even he could do much with these. It was excited wonder. Perhaps it's cruel; it probably is, but I'd reached a point at which I could be glad the test was mighty, unfair even, for I'd had a clear look at the man who must stand the test.

We all expressed it differently and probably nobody gave the correct expression, but the Company turned to rehearsals with a conviction which approached severity. There was no way that anyone could aid him, not directly. All each could do was do his own part, and leave the rest to him. The weight, the problems, the decisions, the physical bone labour, which it takes to direct a play, the mental activity and the creative imagination—these were his responsibility, and his alone. They worked with him, but while they worked, they watched him; ready to help, but, strangely, should he fail, ready to tear.

True art knows no mercy. It's the toughest, most pitiless, most demanding business in the world. Michael was taking on two plays. If he failed in either, if an audience yawned or too many critics frowned, it would be marked down simply as a failure. No excuses would be heard, and none be offered.

If you fail in art, nobody asks the reasons. The failure is yourself. You are not good enough.

5....

THE hero of Stratford's triple openings is Jack Hutt. Jack is Production Stage Manager to the Festival.

He has, as his assistants, three stage managers, each of whom manages one play. By dress rehearsal, and through the season, his staff is considerably enlarged to include stage hands and dressers and a call girl, whom Stratford demurely insists on titling a call boy. He is also responsible for discipline backstage before and during performance, a responsibility which rests so lightly on his able shoulders that he greets with mild surprise the thought that it could be a problem at all.

An actor himself, tall, quiet Jack Hutt turned to stage managing originally as an aside; but part of the genius of Stratford's success has been its ability, unhampered as yet by tradition, to recognize the right man for the right job. The job, indeed, is very apt to grow to fit the man. Jack's has. The organizational triumphs which it takes to keep three plays concurrently in rehearsal are mostly triumphs of his individual mind.

I perched on the side desk in his glass-walled office, directly backstage, one day, and attempted to inform him of this admirable detail. He laughed at me in gratitude for a pretty comment, but he is genuinely modest, and I don't think the nice big idiot even knows that it's true.

Jack is one of the best-loved men at the Festival; love which is heavily tinged with a real respect. I have never heard a phrase, sharp or critical, about him from those he works for, or those he works with, or those who work for him. One reason for the lack of disciplinary troubles backstage among the talented, sometimes turbulent, crew of actors, is the fact that Jack Hutt is the type of man who makes others wish to deserve his goodwill.

Since modesty, in its genuine form, is a quality with all the attraction of the unfamiliar to me, and since Jack is an old friend, who will

let me pry around a bit, I often take refuge downstairs when the office grows too raucous or the green-room too crowded, and observe the orderly actions of his hand and mind. From the latter I have gained much in accuracy, for it is to Jack I take my facts when I want to double check. When I have to ask questions about the theatre, a dozen give me answers; but Jack is the one who admits it, when he doesn't know!

In case the rehearsing of three major costumed plays, cast from one Company, with two directors, limited space, and Equity rulings, to open within three days of one another, doesn't sound complicated, I can give a taste of the problems. Jack is the one who can demonstrate how they are solved.

First, rehearsals run from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. daily, six days a week, with no actor supposed to rehearse more than eight hours in a day.

The rehearsals take place in the main auditorium (the theatre itself) and in a rehearsal hall upstairs. The rehearsal hall has a stage equal in dimension to the main stage, but without many of its facilities. For instance, the trap door in the rehearsal hall is only painted there; it is not raised from the floor. The gutter and lowest step are painted in. There is no backstage, so long entrances cannot be taken. The ramps are only indicated, so actors can gain a sense of direction, but not of level. Above all, the seats are not raked above and around it, so that the director cannot range there to get his varied views.

Therefore, the choice of scenes to be rehearsed, dependent upon the director's view of the needs of the play he is building, must be dependent also on the calls upon the cast for the other two plays. Each play must have its fair share of time on the main stage, and of the actors' time. Rehearsal time on the main stage being of greater value, a call for a Company member on that stage takes precedence over a call to the rehearsal hall; but often scenes are called in such swift juxtaposition that the lesser actors, at least, are dashing up and down two flights of stairs to answer to their calls.

The division of time, space, and manpower between the directors comes down finally to their trust in Jack Hutt's canny mind.

To ball things up further this year, Michael Langham had to have a long noon hour, theoretically reserved for rest. Therefore, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Coriolanus* rehearsals ran to long morning and long evening sessions, while *Henry VIII* struck any of three shifts,

morning, afternoon, or night. *Henry*, despite predictions of cut time, continued in full rehearsal. Michael, although he had two plays, remained only one man, so until the time when Leon Major could take scenes from *Coriolanus* for run-through, he couldn't use both auditorium and rehearsal hall at one time, in any case.

The scheduling of these rehearsals would be complex enough with the manpower available in the Company (fifty-one in all, forty of them appearing in *Coriolanus*, forty-five in *Henry VIII*, and thirty-one in *Love's Labour Lost*) had they only been rehearsing, but the onstage time is far from all of it.

There are also costume fittings. The three fitting-rooms are kept busy all day and evening, and extra dressing-rooms expropriated as necessary. Fifty-one actors being fitted for two hundred and eleven costumes, with several fittings each, would be time-consuming in any case; but a costume isn't one unit. There are costume fittings, glove fittings, uniform fittings, wig fittings, shoe and boot fittings, hat fittings, jewellery fittings, armour fittings. Day after day the lists go up on the call board, after Jack has checked and decided both Wardrobe and rehearsal times. Neither may be delayed.

On top of these, there are daily lessons with the Voice Coach, Iris Warren, to be scheduled some singly and some in groups. There are army drill rehearsals for *Coriolanus*. There are dance rehearsals for *Henry VIII*. There are fencing matches daily for the majors; and, as the duels gain in fervour, they must be scheduled on stage, at hours when the stage is free, so that the actors can learn to allow for the presence of the steps. There are balletic battle rehearsals for *Coriolanus*. There are choir rehearsals for *Love's Labour's Lost*, other choir rehearsals for *Henry VIII*.

There are also interviews, incessantly requested on behalf of, and whenever possible arranged for, an interested press, radio, and television public—many of whose representatives are outright dubious that any actor who “just acts” could be busy. There are photocalls, both for the press and for the theatre. These are not arranged by Jack, but necessarily in consultation with him.

Among his own problems he also has the classes for working apprentices to schedule, and to see that they are ready to aid in emergencies in Wardrobe and Props. Stage management at Stratford is basically an executive enterprise.

For Jack Hutt, it is also an executive adventure. He runs his end so smoothly, and with such quiet humour about its very multiplicity of detail, that many of the uninitiated take the smoothness for granted. In fact, some of the initiates do. Emergencies in other sections not only occur, but are relished; but it never occurs to anyone to expect an emergency with Jack Hutt.

The conditioned reflex of faith in Jack's competence which the administrative branch has developed is best illustrated by a tale from another year.

One day, during a performance, one of the costumes caught fire. This would have been bad enough—Stratford's costumes are valuable—but there was also an actor in it. He rushed offstage; there was a flurry of putting him out, and in the uproar—a quiet uproar, since there was a performance in progress onstage—an alarmist grabbed the house phone and rang Vic Polley.

Vic, in the office upstairs, picked up his phone to hear a wild voice crying, "Jeremy Wilkins is on fire!"

"Well," said Vic laconically, "isn't Jack Hutt there?"

"Yes," said the frenzied informant.

"All right, then," said Vic, and hung up.

I have Vic's word for it that it was ten minutes later that it occurred to him that anything could be really wrong, with Jack Hutt present.

He was quite right, of course. The fire was out and Jeremy back onstage, with singes, within two minutes of the call.

The only performance emergency for which Jack, hilarious, was unable to find an answer was the time during *Hamlet* when an over-eager apprentice at Ophelia's funeral changed position onstage and fell into the grave with the corpse. Nothing would do but he had to be buried with her, and for the sake of the play did not appear again throughout.

Throughout rehearsals, along with scheduling each day's involved activities and keeping track of the actors—for no actor can leave town without his permission—Jack spends most of his time at the rehearsals. The notebook which he carries beneath his arm is probably the fullest record of the needs of the plays which exists at any one time. Even in rehearsal, he keeps track of his actors. There is an intercom which calls them in the green-room; and it carries an extra

authority when the call is in Jack's voice.

Each play has its own stage manager, but at this early point that S.M. is acting as prompter, and also keeping notes on entrances, exits, and crosses. Every major action on the stage is noted in the S.M.'s book, for use at future understudy rehearsals, every prop which is carried on and off, every cut in the text. (Shakespearean purists, be brave! Yes, we do make cuts in the text!)

The stage manager is steadily at the call of the director and is the director's go-between with Props. As a scene is built to the point, for example, where three men with pikes must rush through it, the S.M.'s job includes knowing the moment at which the real pikes, or mock-up ones of the same size, must get onstage, and seeing that they are there. All scenic additions must be carried in by the actors—tables and chairs and banners, candelabra and barricades. Very early in the blocking, it is important that they should have, if not the right item, at least one of similar weight and proportion, to work with, that they may attain that adeptness which will make the action appear effortless. Details like these keep the S.M. occupied full time.

Jack attends these rehearsals, taking care of such details as are outside the S.M.'s immediate province, such as those which affect all three plays, and just becoming familiar with the plays themselves. His quick eye foresees many a management problem before the directors, and these are solved before any request need be made.

These rehearsals also give him opportunity to grow accustomed to the ways of the season's Company. Let any actor be too noisy backstage, or decide to be habitually late (one minute late twice in succession means "habitually", at Stratford), and a word or suggestion from Jack Hutt will cure this state. The actors hate being corrected by him, chiefly because they seem to feel that it was quite wrong of them to trouble Jack.

Because of the area in which his responsibilities lay, and because of his ability to meet them, Jack Hutt worked as closely as any, and more knowledgeably than most, with Michael Langham, when he arrived to open late rehearsals on his plays.

It was obvious at once that Michael had not had time during his illness to do the heavy groundwork needed to give swift, smooth production to two so different plays. He was doing it nights, studying after rehearsal and during rehearsal, daily feeling his way. There

was nothing fumbling about it. Michael does not fumble, but that cool, swift competence which is typical of him was not present in these early days. The exhaustion and the weariness were, and many worried about him; but, peculiarly, we could not worry about his plays. There was a conviction that if Michael lasted, he would stage them. The question was whether Michael could last.

"What do you think? Do you think he can make it?" I asked Jack, while perched on the table in his office, watching the backstage life revolve around. He stared out at a middle distance beyond the glass walls and said, "He'll just have to make it, won't he? And we'll just have to help him all we can." Then he frowned and moved restlessly and added, "There's so little anyone can do. The plays are on his shoulders. And do you know, last night he told me he thought I might need more rest, that I looked tired." Jack stared at me in despair. "That I looked tired! And when you think of *him*. Well, there's one thing I know, he won't see that look again. He has troubles enough without needing to worry about me."

I am perfectly certain that never in the history of Stratford did Jack Hutt worry anyone—unless it might be for his welfare. He is in the theatre, after all, from 9:30 A.M. till around 11 P.M., after the last rehearsal, and often past midnight. That is for a six-day week, save on the weeks when he has to be there Sunday, too. It seems quite possible that he might be drowsy in the evenings, but I must admit I've never caught him in that state.

He was quite right, though, and Michael did need aid, aid which nobody as yet in the theatre could give him.

Because by the time this appears it will be quite clear that Michael Langham did survive the season, this repetition may seem pointless; but the facts deserve recording once and for all.

Michael had been hospitalized in England for an internal ailment, one which affected the lining of his stomach. It had struck at him once before. That first time, he had had an operation, and believed himself cured; but it proved that the diagnosis had been inadequate. When he collapsed this year, the trouble was at last traced to the hardships and deficiencies he had suffered in five young years spent in a German prison camp.

Once the ailment was diagnosed, medical science could return him to his full strength; but the effects of his collapse, of his then con-

dition, were such that to recuperate, he needed rest and care. With that, cure was probable. Without it, he could so damage his system that he would be crippled for life. A director's stock in trade is himself; he must be active, and in risking that physical self he was gambling his whole career, the only life he loves, the only business he knows. He could have quit at the outset, and although the disaster would have struck at Stratford, he would have had medical warrants to prove that it had to be so.

Even after he started, he could have reserved his energies, he could have spared himself. Had any slightest trace of funk assailed him, he could have cut corners and would have done so. He did not.

He flew to Canada. He had been warned not to work or worry. Work he chose, worry he was given. By one of those flukes which occur when fate is in testing mood, Michael's wife Helen fell seriously ill, and had to stay in England.

He flew to Stratford alone, and moved into the home of a doctor friend; and, his physical strength depleted, his energy on the ebb, but his moral stubbornness at an all-time high, he set about his work.

This would have been a feat in any profession; but in his, the work requires not only heavy and incessant physical activity, but mental balance, perception, all his artistic attention, and judgment at the flood. Indeed, it requires business acumen, too. In that long noon hour which I so quaintly referred to as a time of rest, he "rested" from his directing by running the offstage parts of the Festival.

If any thoughts of stopping ever struck him, nobody ever heard them mentioned. In the first two weeks, however, there was a feeling best expressed by saying he seemed absent; not absent-minded, never absent-minded. He was there and he did his work and we gained by his spirit, but the familiar Michael just didn't seem to be there.

He tells me, now, that he wasn't. He'd retired into his mind to do his homework. The study he hadn't been able to do in hospital, he did now.

But whatever one saw then, added up to the facts as Jack Hutt had expressed them. He needed help and there was little we could do.

Tanya and Jack and Leon did as much as any could do, and the Company rallied around him; but it needed a something extra, something more.

We needn't have worried.

The something more was coming.

In fact, it had landed from England and was on a train for Stratford at that very time.

6

“WHAT,” demanded Tanya Moiseiwitsch of the atmosphere in the middle of the green-room, “is the matter with Vic Polley and John Hayes?” There was a nice run of laughter beneath the tone of the query, but it was tinged with desperation, too. “The two of them came down to my office and leaned on each side of my drawing-board and said ‘A-a-a-h!’ ” With the description, Tanya turned slightly ecstatic, lest anyone miss the quality of that “Ah”. It was the All Gone look of star-struck fans on seeing their idols. It is not a look which is customary in Stratford’s rehearsal halls.

“What brought this on?” somebody asked. Neither Vic nor John is easily swept off his feet.

Tanya collected her tea and settled down before she answered, and by this time she was wearing an All Gone look of her own.

“The master has arrived,” she answered softly, and retired from conversation to ruminate with a half smile over secret musings of her own.

The arrival of Paul Scofield at Stratford, and his immediate effect thereon, was an episode of such peculiar luminescence that it can’t be described, and can only be faintly indicated by the quality of the characters who joined in this united swoon. Vic Polley, Administrative Director of the Festival, is not a lightly emotional type; he admires actors, but he has known many of the best and worst. John Hayes was raised in the theatre. His father’s exploits onstage fill up quite a space in the theatrical *Who’s Who*, and John’s own experience has been broad and varied. The personnel of the theatre gain by his friendship, but he’s not apt to be too deeply impressed by them.

Tanya, of course—but we’ll get to Tanya in a minute. The general idea is that she’s met a star or two before.

Yet, Paul Scofield and his family—his wife, Joy Parker, and their daughter Sarah, nine (son Martin, sixteen, was to join them later)—

had arrived at the station in Stratford, and these three, together with Michael Langham, had trundled down to do the honours and greet them. They had seen him for exactly long enough to drive him the few blocks to the house he had rented for the summer, and then had drifted back in a cloud to the theatre, acting as if a rainbow had just brightened their lives.

They didn't say much; they just looked out windows thinking long thoughts, which were private, and smiling to themselves. John Hayes wore a steady smirk of content and discovery which was enough to make one long to trip him on the stairs.

The whole thing began to work up an opposing feeling among us. "A star is a star is a star, but he's also an actor, so what?" sort of thing.

As it happened, however, we had something else to divert us that day, and also to supply a yardstick by which to measure Scofield's impact upon us as a man.

Sir Laurence Olivier was at this time playing in *Beckett* at the O'Keefe Centre in Toronto, one hundred miles away. As Stratford's stage is unique, and also uniquely successful, it creates a powerful pull among those whose life's work has been on a stage, and it is quite customary for anyone who gets within sighting range of it to come and see it; and we had assumed that Olivier would be out. I may say, assumed with not too much excitement about it. We wanted to see him, yes, but the pre-season had taken over and anyone from outside was also outside our lives.

Apparently, there was a fluff of confusion about arrangements, on and off, and yes and no; at least, we read as much in the Toronto press. What was happening on Stratford's private lines I do not know, but it chanced that when Olivier did decide to drive out to the theatre, he struck the very day of Paul Scofield's arrival from overseas.

"Laurie Freeman, Wiggy (theatrical hairdresser) to the Festival, is a Stratford veteran at twenty-one."

"Jewels came up from Fred Nihda's jeweller's workbench."—Fred with Kathy McLay of Props.





Arrangements about this visit were only slightly more involved than those which cover a royal progress. There were to be no pictures, no press, no meetings with the Company. This was a private visit, necessarily brief. Sir Laurence would merely stay to see the theatre and the stage. Since to one of the world's great actors to "see" a stage means to get on it and to feel it, and since he had no wish to meet the Company, rehearsal for the afternoon was cancelled and a great many of the Company dispersed; some, however, lingered around simply to see him. He is, after all, the top of the profession toward which they direct their lives.

I imagine these arrangements suited those who made them, including the top echelon of Stratford, but they bred a peculiar situation; and those who sensed the mood of the theatre, knew that straight before Paul Scofield's feet there lay a trap.

He was star of this season. He must lead this Company.

To the theatre he had not yet seen, was coming a yet greater star, who did not wish to meet the Company. The two knew one another in England, yet had Scofield made his first entrance to the theatre to greet a man the Company could not meet, it would have created, not distrust, but a distance, and it might have been a distance he could never cross. A subtle touch, a trifle, but important. Many of us looked up expectant of seeing the two greats come in together. It might have been natural. They did not; and whether it was instinct or the happy luck which surrounds him, Scofield did not spring this trap.

So, came Olivier. Michael Langham showed him through the theatre (the office, by this time, in such a state about him that, even for Olivier, we were wondering if Michael *should*), and there was a flutter of interest and admiration or of straight curiosity which fol-

Above, Robin Gammell, Ed Holmes, Robert Goodier, and fencing coach Peter Needham listen intently as Michael Langham discusses a scene in Coriolanus.

Below, Eleanor Stuart, Paul Scofield, and Michael Learned go through a scene in Coriolanus as Michael Langham directs.

lowed him as he passed. A few pictures were taken despite the earlier vetoes, and he did meet, and that very amiably, some members of the cast.

They were delighted, pleased to have met him, and pleased to be able to say that they had met him. We heard a phrase or two about it, nothing very descriptive, and noticed the quiet presence and the low, clear, quiet, so-familiar, voice; but as the afternoon wore on towards his departure, the chief mood, along with the pleasant feeling of having seen Olivier, was a hope that Michael would get some rest soon, though he's not a man to whom anyone would dare suggest such a thing.

Olivier left around four o'clock to get back to town for his performance. In a manner of speaking, his going seemed to conclude the afternoon. There was no rehearsal on till evening. The theatre was not busy. The green-room had closed. We were merely finishing routine jobs.

Then, just before five, I came strolling back from an inner circuit of the building, a diversion which I refer to as "research" and make part of my private routine. (Since the building is round, one can go in either direction and land back where one started.) I pulled up outside the door of John Hayes's office, as out of the general office shot two of the box-office girls.

One of them clutched me by the shoulder and breathed, "Have you seen him?" while the other one leaned against a wall for support.

"Who, Olivier?" I said. "Why, yes, he's . . ."

"Not him! The other one. *Ours!* He's wonderful. I've never even seen a face like that!" Then the two girls went off in a daze of communication, while I gazed speculatively at their departing backs.

John Hayes came out of the office wearing the dream-like smile which had grown typical of the day.

It was too much for me.

"Has everyone in this place gone crazy?" I demanded sharply, receiving a yet broader smile for my pains.

"Oh, dear? Something wrong?" asked John, who chances to be the theatre's professional soother.

I said, "No. I gather that everything's just too, too gorgeously right."

"Oh, him!" said John, enlightened.

I nodded, and said, "Yes, I thought you'd know who I meant." I launched it as accusation, only half humorous.

In that second, that happened which grew to be typical of the coming season. I expected John to laugh, or to brush it off, or to grow self-conscious in admiration. Such is the fashion of our times. Quite on the contrary, he nodded, simply. "Paul Scofield is an extraordinary man," he said.

A few minutes later, I reached my desk and crossly began collecting my gear. The day was done, till the evening session, and I had definite yearnings for a crisper atmosphere.

My desk chances to face directly toward Michael Langham's office. I've gained quite a few mental snapshots because of this geographical detail, but at the moment I wasn't thinking of Michael, or of his door.

Then, I looked up and saw him standing at it, and wished to heaven that he'd go home and get himself some rest. But suddenly, my attention was riveted on his expression. It was brightened, eager, intent, as he talked with one inside his office; Michael, relaxed, and, yet more surprising, Michael clearly at ease with a friend.

I was so absorbed by this new aspect of a man to us grown so familiar that I hadn't taken time to consider to whom he was talking, when he stepped aside and somebody else came out his office door.

Somebody else.

A tall man, quietly dressed, with a magnificent head tilted above broad shoulders; brown hair with the first drifts of grey turning it blonder, and brown eyes set straight and wide. A young face, a lined face, a face of no age whatsoever, although we knew he was thirty-nine. But the face was more than merely magnetic; its strong muscles mirrored swiftly every thought and conjecture, and they were the thoughts of an active, vital mind. The face mirrored yet more, for it showed forth on the instant a strength and perception and power such as are seldom met combined.

I've seen Paul Scofield hour by hour and day by day since that moment. I know him talking and joking. He is familiar now, yet nothing has overlaid or changed the impression of that first sight.

Listening quietly to Michael, half smiling, as he does when he listens, as if expectant that something wonderful would soon be

heard, he was a sudden picture. Then he spoke, laughed quickly, every plane of his face lighting up to accent the laughter. They turned away together, and, talking, went along the corridor toward the front.

Turning my head, I caught Christine's eye, as she sat near me; and she nodded, and we exchanged a glance. She knew, also. Oh, it was not just the stardom; a yet greater star had recently passed by. No, it was far deeper than that. It was a knowledge, absolute and unequivocal, that the unique had been added.

Aware of the fashions in words of our times, and the clichés in thinking, and aware that Paul's hair, when he reads this, will uncurl and stand straight on end, I yet know a truth: just the sight of this man had added to our living. The others had seen no reason to doubt or disguise it. I see less reason to doubt or disguise it now.

Jack Karr was looking thoughtfully out of a window. He has a good window to look out of, but also, that was the customary state that day.

"He doesn't look like his pictures," I said.

"Thank God," said Jack, deep reverence in his tone.

We thought our own thoughts in unity for a moment.

"What are we going to do about publicity for him?"

We'd talked this over before, often exasperated at the fact that the man was difficult to report on. Abruptly, it did not seem to matter any more.

"There's the press conference tomorrow in Toronto," said Jack.

"Yes, but about the writing—" I wondered vaguely. We both looked riverwards and observed the swans. I don't recall what we agreed, or if we discussed it further. I do recall that we felt it did not matter. As someone said, "Just let opening night roll around."

"Isn't it nice for Michael?" I said to Tanya on the stairs.

"Oh, you've *met* him!" cried Tanya on a rising note.

"No. Just sighted," I said, and we went our ways, rejoicing.

There was quite a lot of quick communication, on the stairs.

ONE of the joys of Stratford is watching Tanya pass.

In fact, Tanya is always passing; she is invariably *en route* somewhere else.

Designers come and go at Stratford, but to the theatre people, *the* designer is Tanya Moiseiwitsch. The brilliant daughter of famous parents, Tanya has established her own name as one of the most talented theatrical designers in Europe, who . . . Oops! Sorry! That's a lifeless phrase!

During the days of the pre-season and season at Stratford, those who do our creative work seem isolated from the worlds which stand behind them. It gives a special flavour to the situation, as if, talented, strong and vivid, they had simply appeared; as if the work and applause which has helped to form them into these beings, were quite unreal, and as if it just happened that they are the ones they are. Since there is an amazing bunch gathered in at Stratford and wedged together under that one round roof, it makes it a fabulous ground for friendship and admiration; but we seldom base either on the fame that's acquired outside.

This, by the way, is true in all sections of the theatre. Among the Canadian actors, whose television shows appear after they arrive at Stratford, aside from a casual nod towards them, a good-morning in the green-room in which someone says, "Hi, Kate, lovely job last night," or, "Bruno! Terrific, boy!" there is almost no attention paid to the assets which these names have acquired in the outside world.

When Eric Christmas, during the pre-season, received news that he had won the New York Drama Critics award for the best supporting role on Broadway last year—a fact which any other theatre would have blazoned in its advertising instantly—we were pleased because we like Eric. Yet it did not change his position among us in the slightest. Eric's good! We saw that daily. It had no added effect that Broadway told us so.

Consequently, to ring in either Tanya's parentage or prestige overseas is superfluous. The Tanya we know is the Tanya who designed the stage and helped design the theatre, who came to Stratford with Guthrie and Guinness in the first hectic tent days, and who has designed for its stage eight of the nine seasons since then.

Laurie's comment on the summer Tanya was not there is an enlightenment on the gal herself. Laurie, who is Wiggy (theatrical hairdresser) to the Festival, is a Stratford veteran at twenty-one. He started as an usher, has grown up in the theatre, and has an easy and perceptive sense of its atmosphere.

"It didn't feel right, the year that Tanya wasn't here," he said. "There was too much missing without her. Oh—no one to smile at, and no one you felt you ought to answer to."

As the theatre that year was equipped with the customary number of bodies to smile at, and as Tanya herself would never dream of being "answered to", it was a fair, spontaneous description of the viewpoint of the ones who know her well. This dark-haired woman with her beautifully expressive features, quiet manner and sense of play is a personage to whom one would wish to answer. Someone to live up to; to want to deserve as friend.

I don't know if Tanya and I are friends or not. We've been edging cautiously in that direction for three years now—an amount of patience unusual for me to expend. I have a vague notion we'll make it, but there's no hurrying this one. But, friends or not, we are joyous antagonists. As a sporting gesture, I get information out of Tanya slantwise, and she right gleefully joins with me in this sport.

I doubt very much if she knows how very bravely I suffer for it. If she reads, I trust she's going to note.

Take the previous year.

I was writing a piece about *King John*, and she had designed it. Everybody, but everybody, knew exactly its date and fashion, but discovering that these certainties varied, I accosted the one who ought to know.

"Tanya, what date are the designs for *John*?" I asked her.

"Dates! Oh dear, dates! I'm terribly bad at figures—m-m-m—dates." While I was politely waiting for her to peruse a *Globe and Mail* which apparently enthralled her, she gave me a shining smile and was gone.

I later ran her to ground in the green-room. Since I know that her costumes are, as the initiated put it, "authentic", they had to have some period.

I took the pleading approach, and she was sorry for me.

"Well-I-I," she said, "they're sort of, sort of neo-Byzantine." Brooding, presumably, on a further explanation, she got up to freshen her tea, and paused for a word with Mary Skirten; and I didn't find her again until two days later, on the stairs.

"*Ex* crusades," she said as she passed me.

"What is?"

"*John*." Then, with arch surprise, "I thought you wanted to know."

As the article had gone out the day before, the information was now of private interest only. Later, strolling out of Props, Tanya was inspired to add, "*Cum* Bayeux tapestry."

This haul of information entranced me, so I reported it to one of the permanent force.

"Did you know that *John* is done in neo-Byzantine *ex* crusades *cum* Bayeux tapestry?"

He glared at me with a marked distaste.

"We *like* Tanya," he replied.

See? I suffered! And I hope she feels responsible!

Last year, I gained new skills at acquiring information, so successfully that she was driven to striking back. She strode into the office one day humming one of her private hums, and tried to read the paper. Sighting me, without looking, she sighed a deep sigh. "Oh, dear—there's the mistress of the terse phrase, lurking," she said to the headline. She left, but the title lingered on.

This season, aside from eluding me, Tanya was engaged in designing *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost*. The designs for both had been started, and sketches completed, during the winter. The final details, however, waited the actual evolution of the plays. I have heard people speak of Tanya—and most of those who speak of her do so with breathless admiration—as if her form of designing consisted of leaning graciously over a drawing-board—mother of pearl, no doubt, and in an ivory tower. In fact, it's a whole lot more active than that. Tanya's sketches are collectors' items in their own right, but these sketches are only the groundwork for her pre-

season. They are completed by the time that we arrive. In fact, although I had a toe and one shoulder in the door of the Designers' Office those days, I must ruefully admit that I have never seen Tanya Moiseiwitsch draw.

By the time rehearsals are under way the designs have reached practical execution ("Execution is right," Ivan once said, but only he has the right to say it), and the designers are much involved with materials, details and finishing. The designers attend all their own fittings, and one reason that Tanya is always going somewhere else is that she circulates between her office and the fitting rooms, wig room, Prop Department, and costume storage—out of which last a plume for a cavalier or a ruffled petticoat for a court lady may be retrieved and refurbished, but never a costume in full.

The designers choose their own materials, mostly from samples picked up on the local market (Stratford, Kitchener, London and Toronto) by the Wardrobe Administrator, Dinah Greet. They are chosen not only for their tone and surface texture, but for their qualities in motion; whether they are to float or sweep, hang heavily or swing. Some of these are chosen in consultation with the cutters, but the final word is always the designer's own.

A visitor to the theatre once asked me where we bought our patterns for the costumes. Patterns! Patterns!! There are no patterns for that which is entirely original. That is why the skill of the cutters is so important. They are given the material, the sketch, the measurements of the actor who will wear the costume; that is all. The rest is their own know-how. Patterns, sir and madam, are what will one day be made to reproduce that which we now make here.

The facilities of the theatre are also wide open for improving upon materials. If the precise colour is not available, there is a dye room. If the prints proper to a certain period are not on the present-day market, they can be hand-painted, and many full costumes are. Appliqués and embroidery are added at the theatre; this embroidery so bright and so encrusted that it is frequently made by the jeweller.

Also under the supervision of the designer are the wigs, beards, and moustaches for the plays. Facial make-up is the actor's own art, but hair styles are part of the design. Switches and wigs arrive in tones from "lion-mane gold" to "rich mouse", from "red-blue mix" to "port wine", and are altered by Laurie Freeman to the style, tone,

and age demanded by the designer, and fitted to individual head size. The changing of hairlines is a matter of hair-by-hair additions; and highlighting a full wig by adding light or dark hairs is easy, compared to creating a bald pate.

Costumes of the lavish periods have jewels built in, as a part of the costume itself. These are made, each one individually, on the designer's order, by one of the most electric young artists at the Festival: Fred Nihda. Fred, an eager, articulate son of the New World, Polish and Ukrainian by background, has in him that explosive energy which first-generation New World blood often releases. He gives off sparks! And is equipped with the swiftest mind, the most artistic vocabulary, and the finest pair of hands in the theatre. That is saying much! And none will be more surprised to hear it than Fred Nihda. The ways of art come so easily to him that he is incessantly working himself to the verge of a breakdown, because he has a feeling that work ought to be hard.

Fred is, in his own career, a designer, and a good one; he comes to Stratford to work at a special branch of his art. Behind his desk swing crucifixes, necklaces, medallions, an Order of the Golden Fleece. On the desk is a clutter of rhinestones, rubies, topazes, turquoises, settings cast from plaster and settings made of metal; artificial pearls, newly dipped, drying on a row of pins; cork balls, crowns, collars of the Garter, collars of Esses, cords, chains, buckles, bracelets, and a fanciful collection of usable oddments which Fred has acquired everywhere. Jewels to add glitter to the season, and majesty to the courts of kings, are turned out by him after consultation with the designers.

As a side issue, Fred also makes the Festival's false noses. How he came to have this job, I can't answer, but probably because they knew he'd figure it out. He not only makes the noses, but invented his own way of doing it—which he, as a matter of nature, takes as a matter of course.

He runs them in colourless plastic, in moulds which he makes to the designer's sketch. Four or five tries are sometimes necessary to achieve the desired characteristics. These noses, which are covered with the actor's make-up, have to be cleaned nightly; and one of the more hypnotic sights of Stratford is that of a couple of noses swinging gaily on strings below the hair-driers, drying from their bath.

The final detail of the costumes which comes beneath the designer's eye is the "breaking down", or painting. To keep them from looking new or shiny, all the costumes are sprayed, and age and wear are painted in. Highlights and shadows are added, for the lights on Stratford's stage flood down from three sides, and shadowless rounded surfaces look flat. On costumes, on props, on armour—yes, even on faces!—the indication of curves must be painted in. This is one reason, incidentally, why Stratford is hesitant to lend its costumes. Broken down for this stage and this lighting, they are apt to look distorted if seen under front or coloured lights.

The designers are also responsible for props, and must consider not only their aptness but also their portability, for everything must be moved on and off the stage by the actors. The dimensional tricks of creating furniture which will move up and down ramps as with casual effort are often as involved as working out its designs.

In breaking down, the choice not alone of tint, but of texture—of roughness or of shine—is part of the designer's art, and a part at which Tanya is especially adept. When she succeeds, you will never notice the trifling difference in shading on which she and her departments have been at work for days; yet some sense of age, or of brightness, of strength or frivolity, will touch your senses when you see a prop or costume, and so will help to set the scene. You will not think of Tanya when it happens; if she has worked well you need not notice that it happens; but, if it happens, Tanya has spoken directly to you through your eye.

The Wardrobe people and Fred Nihda have told me one interesting difference between Brian's sketches and Tanya's. Brian's sketches are infinitely detailed. Every jewel is drawn. They are absolutely precise, and, therefore, simple to follow.

Tanya's are done in great bold strokes with a small whirl for a medallion (frequently called "that blob-thing", in Tanya-ese). The detail will be discussed with cutter or jeweller, and she often adopts their suggestions, although it's strongly suspected by both that, without their noting, she may have dropped the same suggestion first. Yet the odd thing is that when Tanya's costumes come onstage, they look like the sketches. Line and proportion are exact; she has come up with precisely the effect she wants. Brian's, with all their detail, are apt to vary in their proportions; so, though Brian's de-

signs seem easier to work from, his costumes are the ones which sometimes have to be remade.

Which is the right way? Oh, come now! We're discussing the individual work of individual artists. It's the variety that gives the texture to a season. This is a game in which nobody is ever wholly right.

By the very fact that *Henry* is a history, Brian's objective in design was set for him by the play. There could be and were no variations from period; his business was to set *Henry VIII* in Henry VIII's own times, as vividly and as illustratively as he could. Even the colours worn by some of the characters were set for him; there is a limit, for instance, to how far one can vary cardinal's and bishop's robes.

With the tragedies and comedies, however, there is more leeway, and in both *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost* the work of the designer could, and did, do much toward the interpretation of the play.

Coriolanus, Michael and Tanya had decided to lift right out of Roman times, and set it in the early nineteenth century.

Love's Labour's Lost was set, insofar as I have been able to determine, early in the sixteenth century. Sort of. Ish. It's also semi-French, with a wee splash of Spanish—concerning, as it does, a princess of France and the King of Navarre. There is also a sidelight from—but never mind it; it's too hard to explain. But anyway, it's all very scholastic and the theme is that of the "little academe".

Tanya had herself a really lovely time with this one; and here her flair for colours, for tints and tones and their touch on the emotions, had full play. All of the first of the play, save for the Spanish king's black hair and black costume, is in light colours, "very young, all to be a swirl of youth, careless youth. It runs to greens, in the early part. It's all outdoors, you know. In the park. So, lots of lightness, lots of greens." The earthy characters, the peasants, are in the colours of the earth; the red-golds and browns and dark greens of the land. The pedants are in rusty black, worn and dimmed almost to rusty grey.

The lightness and brightness of the young people hits its ultimate in the last scene, when the girls sweep on in pastel silks so light that they are almost white. It is into this scene that Death enters, an-

nounced by a messenger all in black—not rusty black, as for the pedants, nor glittering black, as for the king, but the blackest black which plume, velour and velvet can attain.

“The scene begins to cloud,” says Berowne, and you hear him. But did you notice that somebody else had helped to cloud the scene? The chiffon cloaks which envelop the girls a moment later cloud all their lightness and brightness. They are beautiful still, but in the sterner colours. And that is a Tanya touch.

I will drink hemlock, of course—with witnesses—if any description of Tanya’s direct, intentional vagueness with me should lead anyone to think she is vague. The “fascination frantic” is that she thinks in pictures, tone and tint—pictures backed by research and brilliant perception, but pictures for all that. My reduction of them to words seems completely silly to her, just as I’d find it absurd should she wish to sketch this book.

This situation of thinking in nameless tints goes so far that, to this chapter of accusations, I must add that nobody in that theatre can name the colour of the seats in the auditorium.

Tanya designed the theatre, and chose the shade of the upholstery which gives the only colour to it, with its weathered oak walls. (“Well, it’s oak—and it’s rather weathered—but it’s indoor weather, controlled, if you know what I mean.”)

With that passion for precision which Stratford makes attractive, I one day decided to give an accurate answer to a journalist who enquired, “What colour are the seats in the auditorium?”

I should have known better. But I didn’t, and, careering back from an observation of the theatre, I asked in the corridor past Wardrobe, “What colour would you call the theatre seats?”

I nearly caused a panic.

“Oh, it’s adjectives today,” said Tanya. I looked at her fiercely.

“You chose it,” I accused.

“Well, yes. I believe I did. It’s a nice colour, don’t you think? I liked it.”

“But what colour is it?”

“Oh, well, it’s a—almost—or perhaps a little darker—Why don’t you go look?”

“I did,” I said.

Out of Wardrobe issued Ivan; Brian from the Designer’s Office.

Any direct query can attract a congress there. "Isn't it a sort of a rust?" said Ivan, and Tanya frowned and read the bulletin board. "I'd call it more rose," said Brian, and Tanya pouted and thought very little of anything she read.

"It's a nice colour," she said softly to a thumbtack.

"Which I cannot describe as rust-or-rose," I said.

Ivan departed precipitately by one corridor and met me later to tell me that it was a muted rust. Brian dashed off by another route and admitted over coffee that it was not-quite-rose.

Tanya, I think, sneaked in surreptitiously later. At any rate, "Do you know what faded chestnut looks like?" she asked me as she ordered an ice-cream bar. I didn't. "No," she said softly. "I was afraid that wouldn't be very helpful, in Canada."

The time had come to threaten. "If you don't name it, I am going to!" I told her.

She quailed before that notion.

"Well," she admitted, almost shyly, "somebody once called it Tanya brown."

I've been slipping that one past the critics ever since then; but some day I'm going to start a competition among non-experts, and find out what other people call the tint that we call Tanya brown.

8

THE first time that I talked with Paul Scofield was over a fight.

Oh, I'd exchanged the odd word or two with him before, for the instinctive *camaraderie* of the theatre is pretty careless and introductions don't much matter either way; but the first time I recall any direct communication concerned a sword fight, and it was really John Colicos that I was hectoring. John and Paul had formed an *entente cordiale* almost from meeting, and were often together in rehearsal breaks.

The sword fights at Stratford are a basic part of mounting plays written in an era when homicide was a domestic art. There is always a fencing coach in residence, to work with the Company, and during some rehearsal seasons the corridors and the lawns outside are steadily a-jingle with the sounds of fencing practice. This was true the year before, when *King John* was enlivened by broadsword battles, and *Romeo and Juliet* by a series of duels and armed street brawls.

The swords used on Stratford's stage are definitely steel, and clear steel. Although they are not whetted to a sharp edge, their edges are yet sharp enough to cut. The points of rapiers are unbated. There are no masks, and no padding, and no defence save the actor's skill. Further, these duels are fought within a few feet of the audience, with audience on three sides of the ones who fight. On a proscenium stage, with audience on only one side, swordsmen can clink their blades together for sound effects, but miss their thrusts by a mile and still have the fight look vicious. Not on this stage. There can be no tricks to suggest a duel; this stage was not designed for trickery. The duels must be fought.

They are choreographed in advance, of course, and must be, because on that stage they must be fought up and down three steps, and it's not the place for improvisation unless you want a corpse to

crumple at the Governor-General's feet. They are also planned, because the play progresses more smoothly when the right man wins; but despite the planning and the steady coaching, despite a minimum of forty-five minutes' daily rehearsal per fight to keep in trim, the duels as fought on the stage at Stratford depend entirely on the actors' skill. The place is rife with tales of accidents from other years, told lightly, and not much accented because they know they have been fortunate.

One which always appealed to me concerned Ted Follows fighting in a battle scene with Tony Van Bridge. In the thrust and parry of battle, one thrust went an inch awry; and with the weight of Ted's fighting arm behind it, the blade ran through Tony's heavy costume, and apparently through Tony himself. Tony fell, as he was supposed to fall in that sequence, and Ted in the scurry of battle rushed offstage.

There he flung himself, sword in hand, on Jack Hutt, crying, "I think I got him! I think I killed him. I felt the sword go in."

There is no spot backstage at Stratford from which the stage itself can be seen. The prompter's box in the roof (in nine years there has never been a prompt at Stratford) was too far away for the alerted Stage Manager there to see if Tony was breathing or not. Since corpses, as well as furniture, have to be carried offstage, there wasn't a thing to do.

"We'll have to wait till they bring the body off," said Jack with his usual composure, while Ted paced frantically about the backstage area.

When said body was duly delivered and rose to its feet, Ted went off into a gale of relieved laughter and popped around to Wardrobe to apologize for the rents in the costume. Lest anyone else be inclined to laugh too lightly, be it noted that Tony did have three cracked ribs and a beautiful gash, as souvenirs.

Tony's own description of the incident is charming.

For a moment he, too, thought that he had been killed, "and even as I fell, onstage, with the lights upon me, I couldn't help thinking, 'What a perfect way to die!' It was quite a come-down when I hit the stage and found out I was breathing. I doubt I'll ever have another chance for an exit like that!"

He may, if he keeps on acting in Shakespeare on this stage.

This business of getting the bodies off the stage is almost as complex as mounting the fights themselves, and the subject has a whole mythology of its own. My favourite side effect of it occurred another year, in *Hamlet*, in the scene in which Hamlet customarily spits Polonius "through the arras". There being no arras on Stratford's stage, this scene was arranged so that Polonius would hide offstage, come running on calling "Help, help ho!" at the Queen's cry, and literally run upon Hamlet's sword. Bill Hutt, who played Polonius, was inches taller and pounds heavier than Christopher Plummer, who was Hamlet, so always died among the pillars where he could be easily dragged off.

One night he made his running entrance, to discover Hamlet, centre stage, absolutely unable to wrench his sword free of its sheath. If he kept on running, he would pass him; but also he would die below the steps, where it would be almost impossible for Hamlet, unaided, to get him offstage. Bill had from the door to the front pillar, a few feet, to decide what to do. He decided. That is now openly acknowledged to be the only production of *Hamlet* in which Polonius died of a heart attack!

Another funerary problem arose in *Julius Caesar*, but this from temperament. A young apprentice so enjoyed his battle scenes that he persistently died in centre stage, directly in front of the centre pillar, which position made it clumsy for his two fellow soldiers, Robert Goodier and I forget just who, to carry him off. They repeatedly told him to die to one side; he as repeatedly failed, and they decided to teach him a lesson. One night, instead of taking him back through the pillars, each one grabbed an ankle, and dragged him off down the ramp. The humane object was to give him the three bumps down the ramp, as suggestive discipline; but one hazard had been overlooked. This soldier of Caesar was wearing a short tunic, and as he was dragged downward, it rode up. The titillated audience, and an incensed stage manager, were treated to the unexpected sight of a resurrection, in which the lately dead was dragged off, with both hands frantically trying to hold his short skirts down.

Stratford's sword blades had hitherto been made at a local smithy, the hilts added and ornamented by Props. With the light-bladed rapiers, this usually served; but with heavier blades, a variation in

balance could cause disaster; and we were using heavier blades this year.

The only time the local smithy deal went really haywire, and that through no fault of the smiths, was when they made a six-foot-long claymore. The warrior wielding this mighty weapon was to swing it twice around his head, for momentum, just previous to trying to behead a ducking enemy. The blade, of course, was solid steel, and heavy. In the first and only rehearsal at which the weapon was present, the actor took the two required swings. Momentum is what he got. The weight of the swinging sword plucked him off his feet and threw him into the front row of what would have been the audience.

This sword was retired. Newly hilted, it was once carried in a purely ceremonial procession; but it is not allowed to go to war.

This particular season was short on duels, and *Coriolanus* had a corner on the lot. The battle scenes were boisterous, and form a separate subject, but the only individual, or man-to-man, fight, was between Coriolanus and his enemy Aufidius: Paul Scofield and John Colicos. It's a fair comment on Stratford and upon the two men to add that it never crossed anyone's mind that they should be given any "handle with care" treatment. It did, however, seem convenient that they should see out the season, and there were built-in problems in this fight.

Coriolanus had been set by Tanya and Michael in an era when the light rapier had already seen its day. The swords with which the two must fight were slashing sabres, heavy, and balanced beyond the skill of any local smith. When Tanya, in London, chose the swords from a military outfitter, she sent for Peter Needham, our Fencing Coach, also an actor, and then playing in repertory in Manchester. He went to London and tested the swords for their working qualities and individual balance, and for their comparative qualities each with each. They had to have an equal weight and balance, or the lighter sword would be swifter. He specifically chose the two for Scofield and Colicos, and also the eight for their surrounding officers.

The swords for the two leads were shipped over in time for early rehearsal, and John had been working off his excess energy with Peter, even before Paul Scofield came. The day the latter arrived,

they went into daily practice sessions. Each was already an accomplished swordsman—a fact which made them fully aware of the need of practice. Negligence is not induced in those who have carried wounds. In a duel in *Hamlet* at Stratford, Connecticut, John had had a rapier point run two inches into his throat. It missed the jugular by happy fortune. Similar fortune saved Paul Scofield's eyesight when a rapier—also in *Hamlet*, but at Stratford-upon-Avon—was run into his cheek below the eyeball and the point penetrated up behind the eye.

The extra skill which they would need with the sabres can be illustrated by one example. The sabre is a cutting sword, and often the cuts are parried within inches of the face or head of the defending actor. The attacking blade is caught on the sword of the defender. Simple enough? Yes, but if the hand which is making the offense twists ever so slightly, so that instead of the edge of the blade, the flat of it strikes the defending sword, the steel is so tempered and limber that it will whip around in a curve, and may give a serious wound. The hand which holds the sabre cannot vary, either in angle or direction.

Now, out in Publicity, we get a mite heartless; we are forced to be so by the press. During rehearsal season, they are forever wanting bright news items; and while we're making plays, news is an item we don't make. This was a particularly newsless season; it was part of what we called "the eerie calm". Delightful for the artists who were working, but difficult to define to an attending press.

A day or so after Paul Scofield's arrival, I was musing on this problem in the green-room, while he and John Colicos sat at a nearby table discussing their fight. Valuable property, both of them, mind you; but it crossed my mind that if either should get wounded, even bruised, it could be useful in its way. So I popped over to John, with whom I was on terms of a sort of warring cordiality, and all in a rush and bubble said, "Oh, by the way, since you were talking about the fight and since you two will be fighting and since you're the only fight this year if you should happen to get any cuts or bruises which you wouldn't be apt to mention and which we hope you won't, of course, but if you should, would you please let me know about them as soon as they happen. With details? Please." No reaction. "We had a couple of broken hands last year," I added, to

test what a spirit of emulation might produce. "And, well—you know what I mean."

"I know what you mean," said John, grimly. "You want our blood."

"I didn't specify blood," I said. "But I'll consider the offer." Then I grinned hopefully at the two of them. "Are you two really friends?" This query brought my gaze around to his antagonist.

"It would appear that we had better be," said Paul Scofield.

Our eyes met, and the amusement which had been evident without a smile became a smile then, and he arose and held out a hand. This is unusual in a theatre; so was the hand clasp when I felt it—firm, direct, and eager, the way his eyes are whenever Paul Scofield enters a room. He seems to expect that something interesting is awaiting him in any room he enters, and he strides in, in search of it. The handshake indicated as happy an expectation of someone new he'd met.

"That's Joan," said John Colicos, and I thought he sounded critical. Paul Scofield nodded and settled down again.

I explained further how nice it would be if—or rather, pardon me, how terribly, terribly upsetting!—if anything should happen, but that, of course, my sympathetic spirit would like to be informed of it immediately so that it could—well—sympathize!

"It's only a small wound I'm asking; we can't spare you for the season. Business is business, and the box office might fall off."

"There will be no small wounds," said John. "Not with these swords! It will be a beheading, or nothing."

"Well-l-l. You two are the only ones who are fighting this season."

"I have a suggestion," said Paul Scofield, in his clear English tones. He had been listening to this quietly, semi-present. Now he smiled serenely at John; so serenely that I thought we were going to have a decline into that most uncommon quality, common sense. Even John looked at him wanly as we waited. "We can't spare each other for the season, but news is news. We should help, so after a few more rehearsals, don't you think we could spare the fencing coach?"

I could all but see blood upon the pavement. So could John.

"It's a little early, yet," said John, compassionately.

"Yes. We do still need him," Paul agreed. They regarded each other with the interest needful to conspiracy. "About June 10th,

perhaps?"

"All right with me," said John.

Paul beamed on me. "Then we'll do in Peter," he promised. "Anything to co-operate."

Uh-huh! And that would have concluded the season, for fair! The blood I had seen flowing in that flash of prescience had not been Peter's. It was theirs. Indeed, if two, six, or twenty marauding actors ever do decide to do in Peter, I propose to attend with two, six, or twenty stretchers, for they'll be needed to tidy up the mess.

Peter Needham, slender, wiry, effective, and quick, both of eye and hand, sometimes grows a mite touchy about the amount of attention paid to his fencing activities. He is, primarily, an actor—he and Robin Gammell played the young officers who are the friends and colleagues of Coriolanus, and gave the roles such aristocratic flourish that they gained a private following among the audience—and the fencing is, he insists, "an aside". It is an aside which is of prime importance in classical theatre, however, and despite his brief flurries of impatience, Peter enjoys it to the full.

Originally, he learned fencing as a sport, during his service with the R.A.F. in England. Later, as his own career took him into the theatre, he adapted what he had learned to theatrical purpose, though when chance and worthy antagonists offer, he still uses it as a sport.

Stage fencing differs from real fencing mostly in the size of the gestures. It is absolutely necessary that the audience should be able to see what is happening, and be able to follow it, so the delicate subtleties of fencing are usually abandoned in favour of the broader, often more dangerous, strokes.

Peter's job, in designing the fights for Stratford's stage (he usually does his planning by fighting his left hand against his right, with his wife Julia's knitting needles as swords), is to create fights which are true to the period, true to the characters who fight, possible on the multi-level Stratford stage, and within the range of the actors who must do the fighting.

There was no question about the skill of the antagonists in the *Coriolanus* duel, for they had both experience and a driving will to work; and Peter also made an advantage of what could have been a disadvantage: the absence, onstage, of a watching crowd. When a duel is fought with witnesses, these witnesses can often telegraph

to the audience the progress of the fight; but in such case, the duel itself has to be moved early into general rehearsal to give director and attending actors a chance to group around it. It is also limited as to area.

The *Coriolanus* duel, involving only the principals, Peter kept in private rehearsal until dress-rehearsal week. As a result, he had opportunity to drive it to a finish and ferocity such as are seldom seen upon a stage. Throughout the season, it drew a roar of applause from watching audiences; but before that, it drew gasps from the actors. John and Paul became so certain of themselves with the sabres, that on the nights when the fight was at its fiercest, they were striking with such firmness that showers of sparks fell around them as they fought.

They came through, without a beheading! But there were a few oddments which the audience did not see; or rather, did not fully comprehend.

One night John drove Paul too far out on the dais-like projection, built on the right front corner of the stage for this one play, which Michael had dubbed the "tummy". Paul took his jump onto it, and went a few inches too far out. On the turn, he slipped and crashed backwards the three and a half feet to the gutter below, his head striking within inches of the concrete rim.

"It was much harder on John than on me," he said afterwards; and John agreed. "After all," Paul went on, "I had something to do—get up and get back into the fight." He did get back into it; but the following night he found the going harder, for by then he was stiff from bruises. They were so spectacular that it was a pity that on that night *Coriolanus* couldn't really have shown his wounds.

Once in a while, one or the other would make an error, unnoted by watchers, and acknowledged only by a softly breathed "Sorry". One evening this politeness ran out of hand, however, when Paul made some slip or other, and, coming close to John in a hilt-to-hilt clinch, remarked, his face still twisted in *Coriolanus*' fury, "Frightfully sorry, old chap!" The courtesy was cordial, but it almost broke John up. ("Breaking up" means laughing onstage; "drying" means forgetting one's lines, and both are criminal.) Luckily, the audience accepted the Colicos gurgle as a snarl of rage, but his shoulders were still shaking when he came offstage.

Another night, Paul paused to think a thought of his own in the midst of the duel—not just the time for thinking—and somehow managed, by one of those skips of the mind which actors have, and dread, to omit one move. It was an important one. He forgot to disarm John.

They had come to the end of the fight, when Aufidius' henchmen rush on, and with his last stroke Coriolanus is to knock Aufidius' sword flying. Then, as Coriolanus fights the others, outnumbered, Aufidius seizes a sword from one of them, but suddenly calls them off, "You have shamed me in your condemned seconds!" He breaks his sword, and rushes off.

Of course, it's the sword seized from his henchman that he always breaks. That sabre he fights with is far too valuable to be sacrificed, for each sword has its private personality, and each actor fights with the same one all season.

John covered it masterfully. Left with his own sword in hand, he let out a scream of frustrated rage and pitched it down the ramp entrance, then carried on, disarming his follower as before. The audience may have thought he was flinging too many swords around in high-handed fashion; but if they found it odd, nobody at the theatre ever heard.

The only one who was really surprised was Paul, who heard the scream. He actually did not realize that he'd skipped the one blow to disarm John, and that was no minute for gazing about to see what had happened. When he heard, backstage, he gave a muted scream of his own.

It was Paul, by the by, who told me this story. He's told me most of the ones where the errors are his.

The fights, however, were far too serious to draw much humour, and only the envied skill of the fighters created the chance for fun.

I used to drop around often to the fight rehearsals; not, in this case, for items humorous or otherwise, but simply for the pleasure of watching acts of energy and skill. Besides, I liked the sound effects—the scuffle of feet, the deep-drawn breaths, the musical ring of steel on steel.

Paul Scofield is not one to rest upon his laurels. (Besides, on this continent, he did not yet have laurels upon which he could rest.)

A great star is apt to work harder than those about him; but he couldn't work harder than John, who is on the way up. With men of such stature, there was a fascination in watching the passionate will with which they mastered detail, their willingness to be taught, to be coached, to surrender themselves to the moment, to set pride aside to improve yet another theatrical skill.

There was also something exciting in watching Paul and John at work together. This struck me often, in the fight rehearsals, in their *Coriolanus* scenes together. I could not put a finger on just what it was which teased for my attention. It was not a unity, it was just some odd, enlightening comparison which, with one of those half flashes of perception which can plague one, I sensed, but could not yet identify.

I decided it must be that: comparison. They were so utterly different, it was bound to be odd to see them combined. John, clever, tempestuous, energetic son of the New World; Paul, brilliant, quiet, indulging in no tempests, yet master of a vital energy to match John's own.

Each was a type of the world which stood behind him; and Stratford's season was a merging of those worlds.

John did supply some gore for me one day, and that during rehearsal. He came dashing into the office, tenderly cradling it on his hand.

"Look, blood!" he said, pointing to a prick at the base of his thumb and squeezing to get out a bigger drop.

"One drop isn't enough," I answered coldly. "It's like the snowflake in winter."

"I thought Publicity could enlarge things," said John. "I brought you blood—what more do you want?"

"We don't enlarge things here. We're honest. That nick isn't big enough to count as news."

"You want too much," said John, and paced off to the green-room, there, I assume to nurse his wounds.

9...

WITH the majors of the cast all present, although late—Zoe Caldwell of Australia, flown in from England, was the last of the leads to arrive—the raw stuff of rehearsals was at last assembled. But the schedules were being forced.

The late start of *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, the late arrival of their stars, drove their early rehearsals, which should have been for the general establishment of relationships and character, and for blocking, right into the days when the lesser members of the Company appeared. The actors do not all gather at one time. The twenty-eight major members of the Company go into rehearsal weeks before the minor actors and the apprentices arrive.

In *Henry VIII*, this was no problem. George McCowan's problem was to keep *Henry* one piece with overmuch, far overmuch, early rehearsal with the leads. They had had a far larger proportion of time on their own than is usual before the arrival of apprentices and extras, and consequently the addition of these others was a welcome change. It is perfectly possible for a performance, a scene, or a play to pass the finish line before its opening moment, and George had been driven into the situation of having to lean back on the reins and keep his production almost standing still.

As an exhibition of skill in directorial pacing, this feat couldn't well have been outdone; but the need to hold the play together and keep it moving, while restraining it from building too quickly, made its rehearsals dull.

Tremendous performances were being underplayed there, daily, and underplayed with a will.

Kate Reid's Katharine grew quite casual and chatty. Douglas Campbell played Douglas Campbell fully as often as he bothered to play Henry, and for a while the former was the more enlightening of the two. Douglas Rain's Wolsey delivered the "Farewell to all my greatness" speech as if saying good night to a friend.

"Oh—I heard the speech this morning," I remarked to Dougie one day in passing.

"You did?" he enquired gravely. "I don't know how that could be. I haven't delivered it yet." In point of real delivery, he spoke the merest truth.

This was neither lethargy nor horseplay, however. Each of three solid professionals had a bolt to loose, but they could not loose it too soon.

Jack Creley, of course, was working frantically, but that was for another reason. Jack is a master of comic gesture onstage and in private life, and George had suffered the blinding inspiration of having him play Buckingham without ever moving his hands. Everything from paralysis to mental blocks assailed him, to hear Jack tell it, and he was working at fever pitch to make up the difference with his voice. The plaintive anguish he displayed about it, though real, was also shot through with a wild admiration for the director who had dared do this to him.

The mere sight of Jack Creley sans gesture was so absorbing that it lured me into *Henry* rehearsals now and then.

Or sometimes I would pause if Kate or one of the Dougies was onstage, or linger a few minutes to watch Leo Ciceri, Peter Donat and John Vernon framing themselves into Tudor lords.

There was also the heart-rending spectacle of Bruno Gerussi banking his fires—in fact, smothering those fires—to play a credible Cranmer. Even Shakespeare's varied cast lists cannot supply all the right roles for all the right actors every year, and this casting was one of those happenstance things. I wish it had not happened. I did not fear for Cranmer; just felt robbed of Bruno at his best. Bruno at his best is one of the nation's natural resources! There was something depressing in watching him lessen himself to the role. Not that Bruno felt lessened. It was I, the audience, who sighed.

For the most part, however, *Henry's* rehearsals had small call upon the attention, with *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, as late starters, being driven through at a fantastic pace.

For some reason, Michael Langham kept his early rehearsals sheltered in the rehearsal hall. It was only after Paul Scofield's arrival, and Zoe Caldwell's, that he brought them down to the main stage. *Love's Labour's* moved onto it first.

Love's Labour's Lost is one of Shakespeare's troublesome comedies in staging, and it ends upon an anything but comic note. One of its difficulties is in its speeches, replete with Elizabethan pun and phrase. It is one of Shakespeare's young plays; and Will Shakespeare, who was one day to remake his native language, was quite able, young, to see its pedantic flaws. A lot of *Love's Labour's* concerns verbal extravagances. The role played by Jack Creley is that of a pedant who is completely word crazy. Bill Needles' curate is just as enthused but far less accurate. Paul Scofield's Don Armado is also a wordmonger; and the words upon which many of their scenes are built are ones scarcely meaningful to twentieth-century ears.

Even the four sets of lovers are word-witty; and the four men, indeed, begin as students making much of an affectation of study, and discussing it pro and con throughout Act I. Even when they fall into love, they fall into sonnets, and it isn't until Act II comes along that the play turns from words to life. I refer to the acts as they ran in our two-act production.

The play is equipped with exactly two good roles, Berowne and Rosaline—John Colicos and Zoe Caldwell—the gayest among the lovers; and one which it was reputedly possible to make into a good role, Don Adriano de Armado, to wit, Paul Scofield.

As basic prep, I'd read, re-read, and floundered around in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Some of the speeches left me completely bewildered; and words are not basically a mystery to me.

The actors were equally baffled. They muttered lines in the green-room and inquired of one another just what *that* might mean.

Actors—and I refer to good ones, as these are good ones—are seldom Shakespearean students, but they are Shakespeare's keenest expositors. They often gain the sense of a line from saying it. After all, once upon a time, another actor said it with Will Shakespeare present. It definitely does have a meaning, and sometimes that meaning can be felt.

This doesn't much help, however, when the problem lies in the mazes of peculiar words.

The words of the great speeches of *Henry*, for instance, are clear in their meaning, then or now, and much could be left to the actors who played the individual roles. This could not be done, save in brief scenes, in *Love's Labour's*, and Langham did not arrive to find

a play or roles already formed. That doesn't happen, in a play where whole scenes depend on mixing up a *haud credo* with a pricket! But he did come in to a cast eager to begin. John Colicos, in fact, was champing at the bit to get started, and when John champs, it's a sight to behold.

John is one of the most clear-cut and individual actors I've ever seen offstage, or for that matter, onstage. He has a personal impact like the report of a gun.

Strong and athletic, with a compact build which gives a sense of leashed power, a physique trained by his years of acting, John has a cocky head set upon his shoulders, with some good things outside it and as many more within.

He doesn't think much of his face. It's a pity, for he's ignoring an asset. He hasn't precision-cut features, the standard by which photographers judge, but he has a vital attraction, a power and a strength. He has also, although it's a mighty attribute to be listed as an also-ran, that basic attraction, intelligence.

His energy and good health are part of his being, and when his eyes blaze into interest in a conversation—I might add that they also blaze into temper, but only when life is running too slowly to suit—or when he leans, eager, across a table to hear a story, or when, as most often, he catches a phrase, an expression, a situation, which raises him to swift laughter, he is a man and a friend whom it is a joy to know.

John is a product of a new world; only a new world could have fashioned him. Greek—Rumanian—Ukrainian—Romany in his background, with the power of his varied heritage behind him, Canadian in spirit with the freedom of his nation's life making him yet more free, he carries in himself the personal authority of those who have had to make their own decisions all along the road of growing, and who have made them, successfully.

This authority, and an inner additive called spirit, give John an onstage asset which has nothing to do with acting. This is a quality from within himself. He can play an aristocrat, a leader, and the viewers instantly accept him as a leader. They don't have to think about it. The reason stands before them. John Colicos belongs at the top.

He can be as cocksure and boyish around the green-room as any

kid in a rough-house neighbourhood. He can be a quiet companion when talking on books or theatre, and one who knows the tale whereof he talks. At home with his beautiful wife Mona and their eight-month-old offspring Edmund, he is the head of his household, not by any obstreperous showing but by natural heritage of an old-world ancestry. His family plays a large role in John Colicos' life.

It had been obvious to all of those who had watched John pacing restlessly about the green-room or lounging yet more restlessly through the first waiting days, that whosoever played opposite him was going to have to be quite a character and a strong actress in her own right, in order to hold her own with him. It would be a love story in any case, of course; but should she be a meek type or one notch lower in the scale of stage technique than he, Rosaline would become the mere object of Berowne's boisterous affections, where the part is written as a match for him.

Zoe Caldwell was flying in from England to play the role. As usual, we knew her overseas credentials—Australia's leading actress, two seasons at Stratford-upon-A., West End plays—but we knew nobody who had ever worked with her. The fact that she had played Cordelia to Charles Laughton's King Lear was not too promising. Cordelia's apt to be a mite mouselike. We knew nothing of her, save this reputation as a tragedienne.

This time, the welcoming committee staggered back from the greetings in a slightly different frame of mind. She had arrived, wearing a man's hat, a coat of bronze suede tending toward the bizarre, and exuding vim, vigour, and a form of It not usually associated with Shakespearean actresses. She also sported a vocabulary which still had eyes popping when they arrived back at the theatre, but they were dazzled eyes.

Zoe, herself, blew in the following morning in a gust of high spirits which caused quite a whirl in the green-room and on the stairs. She was redheaded, vivid, assured, with a figure she did nothing to disguise and yet less to control, and a blithe good humour which almost kept people from staring. She travels in an aura of Tabu. I refer to the perfume.

One of her opening announcements was that her name is pronounced Zoe—one syllable, to rhyme with Go! There are no dots over the *e*. There were little dots over the *e* when she was a child and

defenceless, because her mother put them there; but in Australia—as she explained in an accent which is a rich combination of Aussie, English, and plain Zoe—in Australia, Zoë is pronounced “Zowie”, and she grew tired of being called that.

It was the unanimous opinion of the men of the Company that she might have been called Zowie for reasons which had little or nothing to do with two small dots over an *e*.

There was no doubt about the It, or about the vitality. Everyone took to her, and took to her fast. Aside from a sense that one's brain is reeling, Zoe is an invigorating experience.

After one look at the lady, I dropped around to the files, re-read her advance biography, and promptly decided that it was inadequate. Thereupon, I strove to interview her. With my pen skidding along the lines of a notebook, so she could not possibly be unaware that I might print what I wrote, I collected a set of stories which all but singed the page. They were rich and direct and hysterically funny; but there is only one of them which can be set in print, and I assure you, it's the mildest of the lot.

“Backstage experiences? Oh, goodo! Yes, quite. I'm terribly bad at remembering those and they never seem to be useful. But I'll try. A woman from the CBC phoned yesterday and asked me the same thing. She wanted something about someone famous, like Charles Laughton, and the only one I could think of concerning dear Charles, I told her. But she didn't seem to think I'd helped at all.

“You see, dear Charles wasn't in terribly good condition when he was playing Lear, you know? And, of course, Lear has to carry Cordelia in his arms after she dies, and, well,” she leaned back in her chair, gave a good sharp slap to her curvaceous self, and added, “as you see, there's quite a lot of me. It did seem frightfully hard on dear Charles, to have to lift me every night. Of course, we didn't always get along, but I did want to help him, so do you know, for his sake, I took a frightful dose—a laxative—hours before every show for that whole season. It was frightfully hard on the system, but, I mean to say, if one isn't professional, what is there? One might as well go all the way. It was the least I could do.

“But the thing that really made me mad was that at the end of the season dear Charles rather turned against me. One night backstage—the poor dear was tired—he said I wasn't staying in the

framework of the play, wasn't co-operating. Not *co-operating*! And I said to him, 'After all I've done for you this season! That's ingratitude, that's all!'

I wish I knew which woman on the CBC had phoned her.

It turned out, very rapidly, that Zoe's directness is built in, and remains direct. For a while, our hair stood on end at her comments to press people, but we swiftly discovered that Zoe could handle the press. So did the dazzled press. Since she has a swift mind and can censor her language when she wants to, she's a prize on any TV interview.

Zoe Caldwell turned out to be the greatest publicity bonanza of Stratford's season, even though she scared the wits out of the Festival now and then.

"I love to cook," she remarked when I first knew her, "but I'm not what you could call a cake girl. Mixed up things, heavy on paprika! Wild concoctions, really!" It's as good a description of Zoe herself as any I can give.

Her early days there were fraught with problems, one of which was that she had to dye her hair. Rosaline must be dark haired. It's in the script. Zoe had hers dyed immediately, thus throwing her whole bronze-and-gold wardrobe out of gear. She need not have dyed it for rehearsal, but she felt she should grow accustomed to herself with dark hair. Her descriptions of waking each morning—"Just me, as I've always known me," then looking in the mirror and seeing someone else—were a joy until the day she grew accustomed to her dark hair. I think all of us missed her in her dual role.

None of this is affected; Zoe is never coy. She is a solid professional. The second she stepped onstage in the early rehearsals of *Love's Labour's*, it was obvious that John Colicos would meet his match in technique, in skill, in discipline, as well as in power. Berowne and Rosaline were beautifully matched.

So, in totally different fashion, were the King and Princess, Leo Ciceri and Joy Parker. They, with roles less rewarding than those of the more obstreperous duo, yet must, with those roles, set the tone of the entire play. Both Joy and Leo build slowly; John and Zoe start high, and then tone down. So, in early rehearsals, the royal lovers looked like professional actors, and it was between the other two that the first sparkle lay.

We knew what to expect of Leo; but few of us at the theatre knew Joy Parker as well as we knew the others of the Company. She came there only to rehearse for the one play; the rest of her time was spent at home, or introducing daughter Sarah to the new world. She did not linger in the green-room, talking. Joy is not reserved, but her own life is full.

She and Paul are a pleasure to see together. They make no effort to demonstrate a unity which cannot be hid. It is a very, very English marriage, sweet, complete, secure from outside touch. They go their own ways at the theatre, simply; then turn back, together, toward their home. None could ever comprehend Paul Scofield who had not known Joy Parker; nor any quite know Joy, who had not met Paul.

The amount of solid professional discipline that went into the building of this light, bright play was illustrated one day.

Just after Michael had brought *Love's Labour's* down from the rehearsal hall to the main stage, there chanced to be a tour of two hundred insurance agents, seeing the theatre as a convention side-light. There are incessant tours of the theatre, which, as far as working time will allow, welcomes the public within its doors; but this tour was larger than most, and for some unknown reason was granted a special favour.

Rehearsals are always closed, but to the astonishment of everybody, Michael agreed that the insurance men could come in to *Love's Labour's Lost*, provided they came silently. The whole two hundred could enter the balcony and stay fifteen minutes, while the actors below went on with their routine work. I have an individual suspicion that this exception was made by Michael for a purpose. *Love's Labour's* had been late in starting. The reminder that a public soon would see it was not much apt to damage anyone.

Be that as it may, he didn't bother to enlighten the cast, and when the silent two hundred, carefully briefed in the corridor outside, filed into the darkened balcony, Jack Creley, Bill Needles, and Butch (Mervyn) Blake were on the stage. Standing centre stage, with the stage lights, which ring the balcony, blazing at him, an actor cannot see just what goes on up there, beyond them; but any arrival of such numbers must certainly have given indication that someone had

entered to watch the scene.

The three actors were going through the confusions about the *haud credo* and the pricket. The scene had been blocked, so they knew their general positions onstage, and were tackling the problem of bringing some sense from the text. The weirdest lines were Jack's, and, possessed of the tempo and timing of a top revue star, he was busily turning every line into a laugh. It was convulsively funny, but it had nothing to do with the play which Michael Langham proposed to stage.

Michael is cool, quick and precise as director, and in no doubt about what he wants. Nor is he inhibited by any particular sense of the fragility of the egos of his actors. He admires them too much for that.

As Jack, line by line, was reducing the cast to helpless laughter, he was being reduced by Michael to the framework of the play. The scene was shaping up, improving, minute by minute, and then the audience entered the balcony. I am mortally certain that Jack Creley knew that they were there. At any rate, his projection of Shakespearean puns became wilder by the moment; and, as they became heated and heightened, clearer and cooler grew Michael's voice. They did not engage quite to the point of battle, but Michael was keeping it clear who was master there.

There was quite a tussle about the pedant's whole character, and Michael came up onstage to discuss it.

"This must be a man of furious enthusiasm about words," he insisted; "there has to be tremendous excitement, tremendous energy—but on a subject for which all that energy is just too much."

"Oh, yes. Oh, I see," said Jack, enlightened. "Yes, indeed. Energy! Yes," and back they went to rehearsal.

Murray Scott as Moth and "as his foil, one of the greatest actors of the age"—Paul Scofield as Don Armado.

"The rustics [in Love's Labour's Lost] had a bouncing good time . . . chief among them, Kate Reid and Eric Christmas."





The last scene was right square out of this world.

Jack did all with his voice that Michael wanted, plus hands, plus head, plus body, plus expression. His hands were going like a wind-mill. Bill Needles and Butch Blake both nearly broke up. The watching cast were snorting and coughing, and I was weak just from watching this overplus. Michael did not interrupt. Jack's exit from that scene was, at that time, down the ramp. He finished, headed that way with a final flourish. Just as he stepped off stage, through the silence of muted chuckles cut Michael's voice.

"Jack!"

Jack turned toward him.

"Michael?"

"*Mental* energy!" That was all. Jack grinned and nodded, and upstairs the insurance agents filed out.

Three of them got lost in the filing and I found them wandering lonely in the corridor afterwards. In the course of being guided back to their kind, they spoke of the rehearsal.

"I'm never going to forget it," one of them said, rubbing at his brow and cheek as if numbed by an exhausting emotional experience. He was a fine-looking man, authoritative, efficient, the best type of salesman. "I've never had a lesson like it. I don't think I'll forget it as long as I live."

"Lesson?" I echoed vaguely. There had been a lesson, but I was pretty sure he hadn't caught it.

"Yes," he said. "I thought it was wonderful. I've seen Jack Creley in a hundred shows. He's a wonderful man, and he's a generous man. I mean, he has a sort of stature; yet that other fellow kept nagging at him, and he didn't get mad at all."

The thought of "that other fellow" left me dizzy, but I listened; in fact, I egged him on.

Above, Paul Scofield and Bruno Gerussi "fighting down fits of laughter" at the photocall for Coriolanus.

Below, Leo Ciceri as the King, Eric Christmas as Costard in Love's Labour's Lost: ". . . each letter is a distinctive work."

"I'd never thought of how much of a man you'd have to be to do this job," he said. "I mean, a real man. The self-control and the being able to keep from blowing your top.

"You know, I was sick for him, for Creley, and you couldn't see that he was hurt at all. Then, I got to thinking about it, in terms of my own life.

"Take that last crack of the other fellow's. If I'd done a job I was proud of, and taken it in to the boss,—and he just looked at me and told me to use my head—mental energy!—when I figured I'd done as good a job as I could do, why, I would have quit the bastard on the spot. But Jack Creley looked as if he liked it! He can really take it! I guess that's what makes them good."

He left, still impressed and still talking, while I buzzed backstage to enlighten the courageous Mr. Creley about his abuse from "that other fellow". Jack was simply delighted. It is so far out of his comprehension that one could get a chip on one's shoulder about direction that most of the story simply passed him by; but he was very pleased about the interest.

"Why, that was the best direction I had," he said, grinning. "It took a while, but now I know what Michael wants!"

By the by, he gave it.

"You like working for Michael, don't you?" I asked him.

"Oh, I'm terrified of him," claimed Jack. "He's wonderful! and he simply frightens me stiff. I live in abject terror when I'm onstage for him." Said terror was accompanied by a gesture of exaggerated timidity which would have touched the hearts of those business men.

It touched me also, but to giggles.

"But, I *am*," insisted Jack, and slapped me lightly on the shoulder to dismiss me, and paraded off to the green-room with his terror, there to revel in it on his own.

That man has projection, on the stage or off.

There was also a trifling role in *Love's Labour's Lost* called Don Armado, played by an actor called Paul Scofield.

"Asinine role to waste him on," I remarked to Eric Christmas—from reading, not from seeing, be it said.

"Do you think so?" asked Eric. "Have you seen him?"

"Not in that."

"You will," said Eric, and that was all he said.

10....

CORIOLANUS acquired almost as much comment on the fact that it is seldom produced as it did as an actual play. The reasons given in the public press were various, and we used to read them with distant awe. They were probably all correct.

Coriolanus is the story of a young Roman General, Caius Martius, a patrician, invincible in war, with an equally invincible pride. His pride in nobility, spiritual as well as actual, is one of his virtues in war; but it also makes him the outspoken enemy of the rabble, who are gaining, he thinks, too much power in Rome.

This man's favourite enemy, the "lion that I am proud to hunt", is Aufidius, general of the Volscians. In Act I (these are the act divisions as used in this production), the Volscians declare war on Rome, and Caius Martius right joyfully goes out to fight them. There is a scurry of battle scenes and fights, the Romans win, take the enemy's city, Corioli, though Aufidius escapes; and Martius, hailed as Coriolanus, returns in triumph to Rome. There he is greeted by his mother, Volumnia, a lady with a temperament fully as violent as her son's, by his wife, and by Menenius, an older patrician friend.

Among the honours resulting from the war, he is offered the consulship; but to gain it, he must, by custom, stand in public in a gown of humility, to ask the people's votes. Menenius persuades him to set aside his pride for this one occasion, and, although the people know his scorn for them, they give their votes, because of his wounds and valour. The act ends as the peoples' tribunes, who fear his power, encourage the rabble to reverse their vote, and refuse to confirm him in the consulship.

Act II is full of fury of another kind. Coriolanus comes to take his seat of office, finds himself denied, and in the eventual uproar all Rome falls into a riot. His pride once touched, he cannot calm it, and goes home, there to find to his amazement that Volumnia, far

from agreeing with him in his fury, urges him to go back and speak to the people mildly, that he may regain the consulship. This is to him dishonourable; he refuses, until the pleas of his friends, ultimately reinforced by Volumnia's influence over him, persuade him to go. He strives for the mildness which has been advised; but the tribunes, now aware of how to chafe him, set his temper aflame again, and in the resulting brawl he is named a traitor, and banished forever from Rome.

Coriolanus takes brief farewell of his family and friends and heads straight for his enemy, Aufidius. He offers him a choice between taking his life, or allowing him to serve Aufidius against Rome; and, in a burst of adulation as great as his hatred had been, Aufidius gives him half of his own commission in the army, and makes him a Volscian general.

Act III begins with a peaceful Rome, which dissolves into panic at news that Coriolanus is coming with enemy armies to attack the city and have his revenge. The tribunes beg Menenius to go to intercede for Rome; and he goes, only to be turned away by a cold, determined Coriolanus. Menenius returns to Rome, hopeless and broken-hearted, and the Romans await inevitable doom. Another has taken a hand, however, and Volumnia goes to the Volscian camp to treat with her son. There is a violent scene between them, but in the end he gives in to her for a second time, against his better judgment and indeed against his honour, and spares Rome.

Volumnia returns to Rome, its saviour. Her son goes with the Volscians to try to form a new life there. Aufidius, smarting under Coriolanus' arrogance and furiously jealous of his popularity with the Volscian soldiers and people, challenges him with his leniency toward Rome, and claims it treason. By taunting him with giving in to women's tears, he sets off the temper which has betrayed the man before.

With something like ecstasy, for a fight is that which he best understands, Coriolanus draws his sword to fight Aufidius; but the episode has been planned in advance, and, although he wins the duel, Aufidius' henchmen kill him. The play ends as the soldiers carry him off in funeral cortège.

Curtain! At least, it would have been a curtain if we had had one. As it was, a total blackout had to do.

To stage *Coriolanus* at all, a director has to start by making a whole broad set of decisions. It can be played as a political lecture; it can be played as a demonstration of the evils of power when unsympathetic to the common man; and I'm relatively certain it could be played as the evils of the common man when set against the exceptional man in power. In fact it almost came out that way this time, by mistake; but that was because of the man. Since Will Shakespeare wasn't primarily concerned with twentieth-century politics, however, it is going a bit far to force it politically. Still, earlier productions of it have been criticized as everything from fascist to Communist, by segments of the press which do not customarily devote themselves to dramatic criticism.

Michael Langham, with a respect for basic Shakespeare which is rare among directors, chose to tell it as the story of people, strong people, in a particular situation, and not to bother to indicate just who was right or wrong. Michael has a high opinion of the I.Q. of his audiences, and it's very seldom that he chooses to preach to them.

He did make the startling decision to pick the play up bodily and move it from 400 B.C. to 1800 A.D. for costuming purposes. Since Shakespeare's characters are eternal, they can move to different centuries with ease; and Michael felt that having them in something closer to modern dress would give the audience a sense of contact, of immediacy, which tunic and toga would not. Sections of the press made as much of this change as if it were revolutionary, yet it was not nearly as revolutionary as some chose to suppose. When Shakespeare wrote, and produced, his plays, he produced them in Elizabethan dress. He had never seen one of his own plays in other than the luxuriant costumes of his own era, and, when he arranged his scenes, he had that richness of colour in mind. As a result—and it happens with every one of the Roman plays—when they are forced back into Roman costume, they turn chilly to the view.

Julius Caesar is customarily staged in Roman costume, because in any costume that melodrama can keep the audience involved, and because Caesar's date in history is generally known; but *Coriolanus*, although based on history, is not nearly so set as historical fact as it is as a play. It is Shakespeare who makes *Coriolanus* memorable. He would be lost in the vagueness of legend, otherwise. Therefore, since the play is far more important as a comment on people than

as a comment on Rome, Michael unhesitatingly moved it. He chose the period when Napoleon was making a specialized art of war in Europe, because that period supplied the form of spectacular uniform and accoutrement which this type of joyously professional fighter would demand. Also, as that was a time of revolution, the presence of a rabble agitating for their rights was visually apt.

Tanya's genius—and I think it is genius!—was called in at this point to manage to costume it in that era, without getting mixed up with Napoleon and the French. Her Roman and Volscian uniforms, for instance, are not mere reproductions of those which once bedecked the battlefields of Europe. They are distinctive, with the period serving only as background. The rest is total Tanya.

She was raised to fury—by which, I mean she frowned slightly just before she smiled—by Michael's habit of referring to the period as Napoleonic. She had much too much respect for Michael to dream of correcting him about it. Indeed, the companionship of these two, who have mounted so many fine plays together, is all shot through with humour and respect and formal courtesies; but she was fighting a private battle to have the period called something else by the rest of us.

"They'll get him mixed up with Napoleon," she pleaded, watching the him in question as he collected a coffee from the canteen. "I know they will. It would be easy to do in any case."

"His mouth's like his," I remarked.

"Like whose?"

"Napoleon's. The early pictures at Malmaison."

"There are all sorts of things," said Tanya. "But above all else, the play itself. I'd rather not confuse French history completely. Whatever you call it, please don't mention Napoleon!"

"I'll forget Napoleon forever, if you'll give me a name for the period," I offered, and we went into a bargaining huddle over lunch.

We almost agreed on Consular. It suited, but Tanya suffered a fit of honour, and didn't think we should ask a limited word to cover an entire period. That, from a woman who upholstered a whole theatre in Tanya brown!

Mark Negin, head of Props, was called in for suggestions, and he veered toward Consular, with me.

The next morning, I found rolled into my typewriter a note from

Mark. "Stop presses. Pulled a boo-boo. Make it Directorate."

Anyway, it was costumed about 1800, a point which introduced one side problem; in 1800, wars were fought with guns.

One other problem, aside from the politics, which keeps *Coriolanus* from being staged often, and even less often staged with success, is that of casting.

The actor who plays the leading role has to be tremendous, a master of technique, authority, and personality; but the show around him will fall in splinters unless he has a powerful Volumnia to subdue him and a powerful Aufidius to play against. One other role is important—that of Menenius, patrician friend of Coriolanus, which carries the only humour in an iron play. This was played by Douglas Campbell. "I am known, sir, as a humorous patrician." That statement would do for either Dougie or the role.

It was obvious at the outset that John Colicos' Aufidius was going to be powerful, but how it would frame up was not quite clear. John starts violently, slams into a role with everything he has, then—as he puts it—has to strip all that away and start over. The (apparently) gentle Paul Scofield starts quietly, getting the technical detail set, and then building on that. As a result, for the first ten days the two were acting in two different plays even though they were on stage together; but even then it was clear that something memorable was going to evolve.

Eleanor Stuart was another matter. She played Coriolanus' mum.

To see her around the theatre, offstage, this seemed improbable to the point of madness, and nobody seemed to find it less probable than Eleanor herself. A favourite at the Festival, she has played there several seasons; and nobody had any doubt, among those who had seen her onstage, as to what would happen. Certainly Michael Langham had no doubt. But, "Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear," Eleanor would comment, "I do think it's simply dreadful the way I rail at that nice man. I don't really know that I should do it, and I'm quite sure I shall never do it well."

As I am about to tease a good friend about certain offstage moments, I insist on giving one tip to the audience. The point about these humble fragments is that they are ringingly delivered in a magnificent voice. She is genuinely shy and genuinely modest, but that shyness

and that modesty are raised right to the point of a command.

I first met Eleanor Stuart during one of the deluges which kept the early season sodden. I was racing down the backstage stairs, when a frantic Alex hailed me. Alex is one of the stage doormen.

"Are you going out, Joan?" I wasn't, but looked doubtful in case I might miss something by staying in. "Look, Miss Stuart is walking in this. I tried to get her a taxi, but she said no, no, I mustn't trouble. No! Then she walked right out in the rain."

"I'll pick her up," I promised, and darted to the car.

A gay blue raincoat, an umbrella, several parcels, and a handbag were striding merrily along the river drive. There was nothing dejected about them, yet my wipers were barely able to keep the windshield clear. I pulled up by this apparition, opened the door and shouted, "Miss Stuart, may I give you a lift? I'm from the theatre."

She turned, bright eyes and a bright smile greeted me, but she didn't come in out of the rain.

"But of course you are!" she said, in the deep, rich voice. "Oh dear, oh dear, you must think me very negligent and very unobservant if I didn't know that. Yes, of course. I know just who you are."

"May I give you a lift?" I repeated, as rain trickled down the door.

"No, no, no. That would be too much trouble for you," Miss Stuart informed me, definitely. "I must not grow selfish. And I am sure it would take you out of your way."

"Not all," I assured her, lying in my teeth.

"Then, where were you going?"

I hadn't a clue as to where she lived, but I wasn't going to be outdone in decorum in a deluge. "Your way," I announced broadly. "Right past your house. Please get in." Then I cheated and used her politeness against her. "The rain isn't good for the door."

She fairly leapt in then, and by the time she discovered I didn't know where she lived, the car was started and she couldn't get out. We crossed the river, pulled up by her house, and sat there talking; for half an hour we vied in admiration of one another's characters, kindness, politeness, and she won the game flat out. I suspect she's had more experience. If I was intent, and I was at this point, on improving her character (I wanted her to become more selfish), it was for

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her own sake. She didn't try to improve mine; but she over-estimated it so firmly that it began to have the same effect. We parted on a note of laughter, and I realized I had seldom felt so good. I mean "good" in its fullest moral connotation. She had made me realize I was a paragon.

I doubt that I dented her at all. The slender Scot is solid granite, but it is granite with a vein of gold.

This first meeting did, however, leave me wondering how this woman was going to deal with Coriolanus, so I popped around to an early rehearsal to find out.

Eleanor Stuart onstage in rehearsal is afflicted by a tremendous tenseness, but it is an aggressive, emphatic tenseness, not a retiring one. Paul Scofield, of course, is afflicted by no tenseness whatsoever, at least none which shows upon the playing stage.

I dropped in while they were blocking the scene between Coriolanus and his mother in which she is trying to send him back to the market-place. As they were moved this way and that to get position, I was downright sorry for her. Whenever she crossed in front of Paul—which, in such movings, can happen frequently—she always apologized; then Paul would put out a swift hand to her wrist or forearm in reassurance, until three seconds later, in a different position, it would happen again. Eleanor, in unrelieved black, in the flat heels which are used for rehearsal, going into almost a jerky motion at Michael's word, in her eagerness not to delay, standing very firmly in still moments waiting for instruction, and moving with a quiet try at self-effacement in the others—a self-effacement she will never quite attain—did not look at home upon a stage.

Beside her, Paul, tall, graceful, easy, as swift to obey a direction but with no jerkiness, considerate of her to the point of caring for her, scarcely looked like the subdued, obedient son; indeed, he looked like a peacock. He dresses well, was wearing grey slacks, white shirt, blue tie and a royal-blue after-ski jacket, which was a show-stopper in itself. Just the picture of him, swaying tall beside her, made me wonder what they were going to do to quash him in Act III.

"We'll run it from 'I talk of you'," said Michael, and ran down off the stage, while Paul and Eleanor went up to their places on the

stage balcony. Paul was still using a book. Even that was spectacular. He carried a red one; everyone else's script was black and white. He was merely carrying it, at this point, but it showed up bright against the blue jacket, and one was vividly conscious it was there.

"I talk of you. Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me false to my nature? Rather say, I play the man I am."

"Oh, sir, sir, sir," said Volumnia. "I would have had you put your power well on, before you had worn it out!"

Paul winced away, saying "Let go," and I don't wonder he winced. I had all but tumbled into the aisle. The full stage voice of a stage Volumnia had issued on the triple "sir", rich, ringing, assured, and the two roles had been totally reversed.

Two seconds before, a great actor, who is a graceful man, had been taking care of another; and so help me, in those three sibilants, I grew sorry for the man, sorry for Coriolanus. Gone was the slightest sense that this was a woman he could cope with; but beyond that, in those three words, as first delivered, I saw from what side of the family Coriolanus had inherited his petulant powers. It was an impression which I never lost.

Eleanor, of course, was not using a book. I suspect she learns a play the first time that she reads it. She had come prepared; but the voice and authority were what hypnotized me.

The scene ran on, but I drifted up to the curved corridor above the auditorium, to think and wander. I never worried over Volumnia again.

Eleanor did. She worried over Volumnia, over her own adequacy, over the poor audience who would have to hear her rail at that nice man, and over the nice man himself. Not that she, for one moment, thought she could genuinely subdue Paul Scofield, but that, even onstage, she hated to scold at him.

"Oh dear," she laughed, after one rehearsal. "When he looks up at me crying, 'Chide me no more,' it practically breaks my heart. I always want to go down and give him some sort of comfort. I hope I don't, on opening night."

She gave him another form of comfort, simply by playing against him, full out.

As to "that nice man", he seemed to be happy—and better than holding his own.

Michael was driving *Coriolanus* forward at a speed which was dizzying to behold, and which, with the actors he had in the cast, was bringing forth some strong performances, swiftly. He did not, however, drive Paul Scofield. Not obviously.

Paul was feeling out the part, building it slowly—yet so excitingly that those who rehearsed onstage with him spent leisure moments wondering, audibly, what it would be like on opening night. Audibly, and eagerly. His quietness was not doubt, never doubt; it simply indicated that he was not giving forth, or acting forth, just yet.

Michael's willingness to let him move at his own rate, rather than push him, was not just because he was a star—Michael's been known to heckle stars—but because he was this particular star. He had imported, to introduce it to the new world, the quality which is Paul Scofield; he knew the value of that quality, and had no intention of marring it by any urge to put too much of his own, and different, stamp upon it.

In this particular season—and it was an unusual season, in all ways—this particular combination was a godsend. Michael, strained, but determined to put these two plays on as best he could, saved all his energy for rehearsal; but that energy might not have been enough, had he had a dependent or antagonistic star.

Antagonism there was not; and as for being dependent—no! Some actors are quite dependent upon their directors. Paul was willing to co-operate; but *Coriolanus*, as Paul played him, was going to be Paul's own.

Far more important, he was not dependent upon Michael to give him the best positions on the stage. The Stratford stage is a directors' stage—no actor can successfully improvise a role on it—and it has powerful positions, and weak ones. Some actors, as soon as they discover this, incessantly demand the powerful ones.

This makes the question of the abilities of the main star very important to the remainder of the company. If he is going to fight to get them offstage, some of them are going to jostle to get back on. In that case, Michael would not just have to produce two plays, he would have to referee a war as well.

This season, two points became instantly clear. One was that for the good of the play, Paul Scofield would act anywhere that the

scene demanded. He would willingly let the scene be dominated by others, and afterwards pick it up and take it back unto himself. The other point was that his assurance had firm basis. He was the star of the season, by abilities as well as by contract.

His unselfishness and his powers became, together, a part of the season, and had a marked effect upon all those who worked with him. Indeed, it became accepted that Paul had no "temperament"—yet sometimes, in rehearsal, I began to wonder. Michael was letting him build his Corio (the character, not the placement) in his own way—and Michael has a knowing mind. I used to wonder what would happen, with our gentle giant, if they should collide. It was a wonder I could not discuss with others. Nobody else seemed to be wondering at all.

It sometimes chances that in a strong character, an instinctive action, otherwise trivial, will illustrate that character for all to see. A tiny incident in early rehearsal did so for Paul Scofield—an incident of which, because it was merely instinctive, he is probably completely unaware.

Professional discipline matters tremendously among classical actors. Because of their admiration for individual talent, they will put up with a great deal from their star, but they will also judge him by it. Paul Scofield's instant popularity would have made the judgment gentle, but an incident occurred which set him in their estimation instantly.

Because of *Coriolanus'* late start, the extras and apprentices, who formed the armies, turned up very early in its rehearsal schedule, and the blocking of their scenes had to be done almost coincidentally with those of the major actors. This must have been difficult for the director, who never showed it, and trying for the star, who did not demur.

There is a scene early in Act I, where Caius Martius, wounded and hot from his battle with Aufidius, crosses the stage and collapses on the tumpy. As the scene ran, while Paul lay there the entire Roman army issued onstage from the back. One of the young officers, Robin Gammell, dashed around to make sure their general was alive, while the others executed an involved formation from which Cominius (Bob Goodier) would issue to give Caius Martius the new name of Coriolanus and present him with "the garland of the wars". This

meant that fourteen people who did not, so far, know what they were doing, had to be arranged across the back of the stage.

These crowd scenes are works of great precision, for they must look easy and even spontaneous, yet be so arranged that no soldiers block the view of the audience for more than a moment, that no banners interfere with the general view, and yet that the groupings give exactly the sense of mass and power which the scenes demand. Michael is an expert at this sort of arrangement, and moves his crowds about with a skill in which he clearly joys. Varied things have been said of Michael's direction, but "stagnant" is a word which has never been applied.

On the day of the first entrance of this full Roman army, Paul had had a long rehearsal and had also run through his fight with Aufidius. He was genuinely tired when he crossed to the tumpy and collapsed, ready to go on with the scene. Behind him, the Roman army poured on like a rabble, and up the steps past him flashed Michael Langham to sort them out. As he passed, Paul rolled over, saw that his part of the scene would not continue, and raised his hand for Michael's attention, in an actor's clear gesture, asking for release from his position while the Roman army was formed up.

Michael did not see him. Paul started to speak, but Michael was instructing the soldiers, and the only chance to get his attention would have been to interrupt his work with them.

There was nothing to keep Paul Scofield from moving to the front row of the seats, and lounging there with his beloved pipe while the apprentices were straightened out—nothing except a dignity entirely professional. The second he saw he could gain Michael's attention only by interruption, he decided against it, and, not released, stayed right where he was. He stretched his long length along the tumpy, doubled one arm under his head as a pillow, and held his scarlet script above him with the other hand; and there he lay and studied for half an hour, while the Roman army was set into place.

Apprentices and extras don't customarily interfere with scenes belonging to a star; but that the star would spontaneously leave their scene to them was another thing, decidedly another. Michael had his back toward him; but another group were facing him, the Roman army, as, relaxed and at his ease, he did his work in the place where he felt he should be, simply because he had not been released. After

the rehearsal, half that Roman army funnelled up to the green-room in a hubbub of appreciative talk.

It was a tiny incident, the first of many by an unselfish actor; but it helped set Paul Scofield with them. It was a characteristic grace note which any professional actor would understand.

Watching Paul Scofield rehearse is an experience in dramaturgy. I wish the theatre supplied some word of the type of "comedy", "drama", "melodrama", or "tragedy", to indicate sheer excitement of the gayer variety. I need it, here!

There is nothing actually funny in Paul's mannerisms while he builds a character, but there is an incessant sense of vital fun. He likes to work, but beyond the liking there come moments when he seems to live upon a flash of expectation; when he comes on in his entrances, or waits between them, with an eager excitement which proves contagious to those around.

After a while, some of us noticed that this form of eagerness always struck through him physically. At the times when he was most eager to get onstage and into the role he was creating, he would stand when waiting backstage, rather than sit; and he would be apt to flex his muscles as if to keep them entertained. I saw him on one such day when he discovered a step, the lowest step on the backstage stairs, with all the delighted amazement of one who has never seen a step before. He balanced on the edge of it on one toe, swinging the other foot back and forth in an experiment in balance, as intent as Archimedes must have been when learning the principles of the lever.

When his cue came, he turned from this occupation and with no apparent transition of mood strode on as a furious Coriolanus.

I began to see what Ivan had meant.

When these streaks of energy were upon him, and they usually were, they did not strike only at his onstage moments. They seemed to permeate all his life and everything he did. At such a time he could run through a vigorous scene onstage, then come racing up the stairs, two at a time, at coffee break. He would stand waiting for his tea with a half smile, and, as he waited, turn to look about the room eagerly, delighted with everything and everyone he saw. At these times he seems to delight in exercising his co-ordination and sense of balance; if he was carrying two or more cups, a book,

and goodness knows what else, he would carry them piled up. His balance must be in his muscles, for I've seen him carry extraordinary towers of items, but the second the hand sensed their balance, he did not need to be cautious or concerned about them as he moved.

A reporter, seeing him with pipe in the green-room, used the phrase that he liked to hide behind a pipe. Hide behind, indeed! I always thought he used the pipe as an anchor. He never fusses with it. He never does fumble or fidget, and the only time I ever saw him drum his fingers on the edge of a table was during a conversation which couldn't quite occupy him, so his right hand went on a tour by itself and played what I took to be Beethoven in half time. I happened to be the one doing the inadequate conversing, and it was the last time I ever wasted frills on talk with him. (Indeed we seldom had time for more than a few sentences, but they usually left me with a phrase to ponder—"But art is energy!" was one.)

During the early rehearsal period, these moods of creative vitality were but occasional, and between them he attended to study like the ardent student of his art that he is. At these times he seems to have absolute concentration, and can study a complex speech from *Coriolanus* and mull over its involved relationships in the middle of the green-room, not bothered by chance sounds—and certainly never bothered by deliberate interruption, for part of the courtesy of actors is to leave each other alone. As his ideas on such a speech began to evolve, his expression would brighten and he would murmur the lines to himself, not audibly, but visibly; and sooner or later the hand which lay relaxed upon the table would take off in miniscule gestures, a microcosm of the attitudes which he would later find at large onstage.

You later saw what he can do with that hand, still or moving, for the discovery of a stage on which the audience was close and on three sides of him resulted—perhaps not directly—in his acting some of his most dramatic scenes with a hand or hands behind him. This is a technical trick which only one of the greatest actors, and probably only this actor, could carry; for he could face half his audience, and, absolutely still, trust to his voice and extraordinary features to hold them, with no gesture to aid, while behind him, the other half of the theatre saw the straight back and the high head and the hand which, clasped or straightened, told them the expres-

sion which they could not see. So effective could he make this, that he was saved from the necessity of doing all the sudden turns and twistings which that stage will impose on those who cannot hold an audience so; saved him, with no lessening of impact. That trick was essential Scofield, and it could project exciting drama at its best.

He played most of his last scene with Volumnia standing with his back to the centre audience, that one hand at his back their only signal as to what this electric stillness of his might mean. This willingness to stand in one position gave the advantage in the scene to Volumnia—and no star need do that unless he holds the play as a whole more valuable than his part. Yet that stance, the scarcely moving hand, so held his audience that, with every move Volumnia's, it was still a balanced scene. And it was still *his* scene. He did not take it, yet there was no second when he did not centre it.

In later rehearsals, the moods of brightness grew more and more frequent, as he caught his role and began to grow excited about it. It was an excitement which was found contagious by the whole theatre.

Knowing the critical acclaim which usually follows him—and, I may say, utterly baffled as to why so many critics natter about his superb technique almost to the detriment of the individual powers of the man, which technique only enhances—I one day asked him how he felt about critics.

"I don't know," he answered, easily.

"I mean, how do you feel about opening nights?"

He paused, as if wary of a discourtesy, then, "I love audiences. I like to be before them. But first-night audiences are always different; and I suppose I try to do what the critics might expect of me. I don't know. But from the second night on, I'm happier. Then, it's just the audience and me."

I decided not to quell the joy with which I knew he was looking forward to his first Canadian audience, by explaining that Stratford's first-night audience is like nothing ever before assembled to peer at a theatrical venture; but I did add thoughtfully, "We have rather an odd press for our openings here."

"Oh, really? How nice!" Instantly, eagerly. That is pure Paul Scofield. Tell him anything new and he lights up like a torch.

"Yes, other theatres draw eight or ten, or at the most a dozen."

“And here?”

“Oh, we get about a hundred. American, Canadian. We serve a continent.”

He was too polite to say he thought I was exaggerating, but I think I saw the thought go flickering past his eyes.

“And social editors and columnists and news editors—and sometimes they send their sports writers, if there’s not a regular drama critic,” I enlarged.

This was too much for even the Scofield poise, and he burst out laughing.

“Really!” he said, and I echoed, “Really,” and felt ashamed of myself. It was true enough, but we customarily keep our visiting stars protected from these stultifying details.

It has something to do with patriotism, I think.

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THE Property Department of Stratford is run by an able, tumultuous laddie high Mark Negin, with a chip on his shoulder so big and so inviting that it has to be artificial. It was probably whipped up in Props.

Anyone less in need of such addition I never met. Mark could hold his own in any group in the world. He has a quick, spontaneous affection toward those he likes, and a warm blaze of affection it is; but woe betide those who let this enthusiasm persuade them that they are safe with Mark. Interest there is, security there is not. I have seen him smoulder for days before breaking forth, and at other times have seen him stroll merrily down a corridor, turn in at a door, and on the other side of the door present the first person he met with a statement that would make a rabbit fight a grizzly bear.

I heartily enjoy arguing with Mark when we are fighting foot to foot. He has a good, though an angry, brain, is a fair opponent, and enjoys full-out opposition. We once engaged in a battle in the Wig Room about commercial artists (me) as against true artists (him), and Laurie, the Wiggy, was almost reduced to a pulp because he made the mistake of entering this fray, in which he was outclassed. It was vitrolric but it was articulate, and, after I'd spent four hours simmering down, I discovered I'd learned a very great deal about art.

I liked Mark the first second that I laid eyes on him, which happened to be in the Underground at Piccadilly. I was with an actor he knew, and when they hailed each other, I liked the powers which the tempestuous stranger clearly showed. I tend to trust broad foreheads with eyes wide set and lively, and Mark is a square-head, in the right sense of the word.

The second time we met was in a corridor at Stratford. This being late at night, in the theatre's favourite working hours, Mark said cordially, "I have to finish a piece I'm working on. Come join me."

I was touched by the kindness and popped down to Props with

him. Mark showed me round, then I sat on a work-table while beside me he worked on a small castle to top a staff of state. He works with a half smile, and is always patient with inanimate objects.

I was just settling down to a cozy contentment, when the following dialogue took place.

"You write." (This was accusation.)

"Yes."

"I hate writers. It's only fair I should tell you so. And why."

"All writers?"

(Peacefully) "They are all cheats and liars."

"All? Now, look, there may be some journalists who—"

"All of them."

While my temper rose and his face flushed with conviction, Mark's hands worked patiently along, adding one-inch bricks of felt, brick by brick, to his castle.

"They certainly aren't *all*—"

"I had a friend," said Mark, "who went into the newspaper business and six months later tried to commit suicide. That shows what it is like. Do you wonder that I hate them?"

"Did he succeed?"

"Did who succeed in what?"

"Did your friend succeed in killing himself?"

"No."

"Then that doesn't prove a darned thing about writers! It only proves that you have inefficient friends!"

Mark arose with a muffled scream and the announcement that that remark proved what cold-hearted, cold-blooded etceteras all writers are, while I came off the table in a parabolic leap and announced that if I'd proved it for him, it was more than he'd managed to do for himself!

At this point, I waltzed out of Props, headed for the brighter and less interesting regions; if I'd stayed, I would have brained the man with his own rod of state.

I'd just reached the stairs when Mark caught up with me, and Mark was laughing. I knew the second I saw his expression that I must be laughing, too. He started to say, "I'm sorry," and then thought better of it, and we just grinned at each other. I think we knew in that instant that the sparks which had flown were from

nature. Apology was superfluous, and could get to be repetitive, for they would fly again.

"Come on back," said Mark. "I'm lonely."

"Fine," said I. "So am I." I went back to my perch and he to his labours, while we discussed art, philosophy, and religion, with never a jangle, far far into the night.

We've always enjoyed each other since then, if you will allow .05 per cent for deviation; but the deviations are apt to be pretty loud.

Not so loud, though, that they cannot be forgotten, when one sees the gorgeous results produced beneath his eye and mind. Nor would it be possible to hold a grudge against him for long, for the temper is warmth of nature, and he's a mightily attractive colleague when that warmth expends itself in other ways.

The Property workshops are in the basement of the theatre, on the level below stage level, and form a world apart. Outside the door, racks of swords and of armour, shelves of lamps, lanterns, chests, mirrors, fruit, flowers, chains, manacles, crowns, torches, lutes, a dead deer and a horse's head, stand as index to the shows of other years. Inside Props are tables of paints and varnishes, banners pinned on the wall for painting; tables covered with golden goblets, with flowers, with helmets; the jeweller's bench aglitter with its precious baubles; tables with rolls of working drawings. Props has its own atmosphere, keen with the scents of acetone, Vibrin, Celastic solvent, and turpentine.

Mark is actually a designer. Stratford's position as the major classical theatre of North America, and also its reputation in the theatrical arts, result in a uniquely high quality of craftsmen, and many will take lesser jobs there than their abilities could win for them elsewhere, for the sake of working there. For instance, one of the stage managers is actually a director. Many of the spear-carrying actors play leads elsewhere. In Wardrobe we have four designers, not designing; and in Props there are five. Mark is one of them, but his responsibilities are scarcely any restriction upon his talents; and this year, once the three plays had opened, he was to design for Stratford the Canadian play, *The Canvas Barricade*.

As head of Props (Brian Jackson is still Props Supervisor, but in point of fact the department is run by Mark), Mark has to have a comprehensive knowledge of materials, building methods, and de-

sign. The variety of materials which goes into props runs the gamut of wood, steel, fibreglass, plastic, felt, paper, cloth, and a multitude of binding elements and finishes. As well as artistic problems, there are problems of weight and sound. For instance, armour must not just look right, it has to sound right when struck with a sword. Coins must clink, and even articles carried for view only must have proper weight, so that if they are dropped no phoniness will show. Fruit falls differently from bread. That which is carried onstage for the banquets is usually ornamental, but it has to be so made that in case of accident it won't distract the audience.

One such problem arose in *Henry VIII*. In one scene, Doug Chamberlain and Robin Gammell, as the porter and his man, are warding off a crowd at the palace gates—the crowd unseen, but howling insults from the left ramp, and eventually becoming sufficiently incensed to pelt them with vegetables. They could have been any vegetables—there were some colourful suggestions—but eventually cabbages were chosen as the most effective.

Choosing a cabbage and making a cabbage were two different matters, however; and real cabbages would not do. (Not cabbagey enough.) They had to be right in shade, the leaves grained to show the veins, light enough to be thrown from the ramp, heavy enough to fall effectively, and not heavy enough so that the momentum would carry them across stage and into the laps of the audience on the further side. Marksmanship and missiles have to be accurate at Stratford! Otherwise, we do the audience in.

The cabbages were eventually made of green organdy, painted and heavily veined, around soft centres, stuffed with I know not what to give them the proper weight. They were thoroughly effective onstage; but the backstage fascination is that as much interested energy is given to solving a problem like this, as to designing and mounting a standard to be carried before a king.

The two dead fish which were thrown in that same scene were made of white slipper satin, painted with a translucent enamel, so that the shimmer of satin and paint together would give the lambent glitter of scales.

The only food which was eaten onstage this season was a handful of cookies which Bruno Gerussi munched happily during a *Coriolanus* scene. The cookies were real, in a paper which would rustle

just enough to catch the audience's attention, but not enough to detract from the scene. The paper came from Props, and it was in period.

The paper in the many letters read onstage is also tested so that the sound will not be at variance with the sight. Those letters, by the by, are written by Props in a script proper to the period, though larger and more flourishing than it would ordinarily be. In the case of letters which are present but not read aloud—as those which the four ladies receive in *Love's Labour's Lost*—the words are apt to be just a formalistic set of curves and dashes. For letters which are read aloud, the actual text is usually used, though the actor onstage does not read it. He prefers to rely on his memory. But the text is used to insure that the letter will be of the proper length. No reading of ten paragraphs from a three-line letter will be risked. Even in a case such as that of the unread letters in *L.L.L.*, each letter is a distinctive work, individually designed, in a different script from the other three. Standardization has not come to Stratford!

Since the audience is banked above the stage, it is even necessary that, when a letter is being written, some of that writing should show. In *L.L.L.*, Don Armado has to write a letter onstage. Although an inkwell is present, that inkwell is later carried off, at a dead run, by Moth (Murray Scott), Don Armado's page, and so having ink in it is not precisely practical. It was also considered impractical, or at the very least, inartistic, to have the pen whishing across an unmarked piece of paper; so a small ballpoint was set into the end of the quill. This was still not realistic enough to suit the director, as a quill makes a sound and a ballpoint doesn't. To remedy this, the paper was treated with sand, so that the quill would squeak. Later yet, the sandpaper effect was reduced, as Paul felt that it was interfering with Murray's song, which was going on during the writing.

This fascinated attention to detail may seem superfluous to those who have not seen the plays at Stratford; but, believe me, it is not only the detail, but the fascination itself, which creates those plays.

Another inky bit from *L.L.L.* concerned Jack Creley's pedant, who wears his quill above his ear, and who has to write a poem onstage. There were no pencils in those days, so ink it had to be. The scene is in a park, so where to get the ink? Tanya solved this brilliantly by designing, in period and in character, a neat portable inkwell which

this schoolmaster could wear upon a chain around his neck.

The problems inherent in the action, or weight, of props are often as difficult for their creators as is the actual design.

The previous year's most trying prop problem, according to Tanya, was one of weight. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the dead Juliet is strewn with flowers. Miss Julie Harris happens to be ticklish. They had to have flowers which looked real, which would be light enough so that they would fall like flowers, yet heavy enough so that they would not tickle; there had to be enough of them to make the effect dramatic, yet few enough so that they could be picked up and carried offstage without much ado at the end of the scene. They also had to be flowers proper to that period; just a careless flinging about of lilies would not do. They made flowers and flowers and flowers in Props, and tried them out by dropping them on Julie, until they got just what was wanted.

When it is considered that all this effort goes, not to display, but to creating an effect in which, if all goes well, you will receive the mood and meaning without thinking of detail, it is all the more remarkable. It is also a part of the philosophic concept fostered by Michael. The play's the thing, in every department in the theatre; and not Props, or Wardrobe, or any actor worth his greasepaint, will think of a private display to the detriment of that.

Mark's and Tanya's greatest problem this year, too, was vegetative. It had more to do with visual reticence than with display.

Love's Labour's Lost is set in the park outside the palace of the King of Navarre. Each play usually has some identifying set piece or ornament, which remains in place throughout the play, not as scenery but to give a touch of atmosphere. These are never to be obvious enough to distract the audience from the action, for "action" is the key word of this stage. In this case, Tanya filled the two upper windows, which would not be used during the play, with huge dusty volumes, a globe of the world, and an orrery. All of these were made in Props under Mark's supervision, and then painted the same weathered oak as the walls. The idea was that they might give interest for a glance, hint at the King's obsession with his "little academe", and then sink into the background, forgotten, when the play took over the stage.

Fine. But, to indicate the park, it seemed well to have leaves across

the front of the balcony. These would be few, for gaining a great effect with slight strokes is part of Tanya's prowess; but the idea of having them green struck her as being too gaudy. They would interfere with the general null-and-voidness of the background, she felt, and might even interfere with the scenes as played below. So she and Mark went to work to make leaves to blend with the woodwork.

The theory was fine. The problem was that when you suddenly make leaves of weathered oak, they don't look like weathered oak leaves; they look like leaves which are dead. This would be to proffer the audience an open invitation to melancholy before the play had opened—not precisely the effect which Michael had in mind!

To settle this, Tanya and Mark went to work to find a shade which would be green enough to suggest leaves, dark enough not to be distracting, light enough to be happy, and dull enough not to glitter under the lights. According to Tanya, it took eleven to twelve tries. The result was worth it; not an impressive result, far from it, but a retiring result. The audience kept thinking "park" without staring at leaves. This is part of the designer's most designing art.

This choosing of the colours, of course, illustrates the reason why Tanya cannot name a colour for me. I may say, or see, "green". Tanya knows and sees some sixty tones and tints of green, understands their visual, senses their emotional, effect. She could no more settle for "green" as such, than I could limit my working vocabulary to the verb "to be".

A phrase like "eleven tries" is so dull as a statistic—so exciting to live with. Nothing but the spirit of the ones who do it could enforce such pains, nothing but the aspiration which is art.

It is also the reason that the unique fact of a theatrical enterprise all under one roof has such tremendous effects onstage. In other theatres, with the designer working in one part of town, the props department in another, costumes executed in a third, and director and actors rehearsing on a stage which is not the stage they will finally play on, this tremendous excitement of detail could not possibly occur. Such plays are fitted together from many pieces; and, when the job is well done, the joinings are scarcely seen.

Here, there are no joinings! Each play is formed in one piece—the work of many hands, of many skills, but of one effort. In that effort, incredibly, jealousy is almost unknown. There are often flur-

ries about other subjects, but about the plays there are not. Great creative effort is a mighty unifier. Those who believe that the arts are merely a field for squabbling would get quite an education from Stratford's backstage *esprit de corps*.

Mark's temper, which can flare up on other subjects, does not express itself as impatience with his work. Indeed, I think that problems in it, real problems, are a rest to his taut mind. For those, he has the patience of a craftsman.

I remember one night when Tanya had cajoled me into sewing lace medallions onto net, for appliqué on her *L.L.L.* costumes, and so I was perched on a high stool in the designers office, late. (I make it sound like a virtue. Actually, I was drafted by force.)

There is a lovely, weary hour in the theatre, a time of deep companionship and work and peace. Usually, it falls just after midnight. Then, Props and Wardrobe have paused for tea and talk, and most of the rest of the theatre have gone. Those who stay on to work are those with one particular project, and it is as if all intruding thoughts and interests were swept away. It is a time of quiet comradeship, unspoken, for words do not then flow easily; a unity between many, working and overworking toward one end.

There is a beauty to such tiredness, real beauty, a radiance which shines out from within. Tired eyes can glow, wan cheeks can pale to near transparency. Yet it is not the tiredness which makes the beauty; it is the spirit that exhaustion can't control. I suspect it is a part of real art, for tired minds, driven straight toward one object, sometimes attain to clarity which touches inspiration, a perception which full energy at other times obscures.

At such times, all remaining powers are turned toward one purpose. Eyes, focused intently on the work in hand, chancing to look up at a person or a distant object, will widen in surprise as they have to make, consciously and slowly, the change in focus which would be an instantaneous reflex by day. A hand, working delicately upon exquisite detail, will fumble and fail in some ordinary gesture such as picking up a pencil. Reaching for something across a work-table, fingers which have been moving with precision will clumsily knock over some object that may be in the way; and it will lie where it may fall.

On such a night, in such an hour, Tanya was at her work-table, in

slacks and a bright shirt, her hair dishevelled where fingers had run through it, as if the pressure of a hand upon a weary temple could give extension of energy and of creative time. She was atop a tall stool, one leg braced for balance, the other heel hooked over a high rung, while she painted a cameo necklace for Mrs. Corio.

The cameos had been cast. The blue-grey background to highlight the heads was that which occupied her fingers. The braced foot, the elbow leaned on her desk, suggested physical dejection; yet the brush in her hand moved accurately, delicately on the cameos.

The shade of blue displeased her. She gazed at it fixedly, shook her dark head, and said "No!" softly, "No, this really will not do." Not to me, not to herself—almost as if it were to the necklace that she spoke. It was late, or early; she wanted to get home, to sleep; none but herself would ever know if it was right or not right, but—she had no doubt, and turned to mixing subtly different shades of blue.

Brian came in and out, from conferences with Ivan about a *Henry* costume, smiling as if he knew a secret almost too promising to bear. Beyond Tanya, Dinah Greet, Wardrobe Administrator, worked silently with her samples and her charts, and lined out the notices of the fittings for the day to come.

Four times, Mark Negin came up to the door. He too was trying paints. I do not know what the precise object to be painted was—it may have been the books up in the casements—but he was trying paints upon a piece of wood.

He would come to the door, eyes dark and weary, in slacks and a short-sleeved sports shirt, his muscular arms and hands splashed with the gold and silver and myriad other colours of Props, a streak of green across one cheek, and in one hand a board freshly painted in a tone of silver grey.

"Do you think this does it, Tanya?"

And Tanya would turn to look, and stand to meet him, and both would look on the board with an intentness which seemed to shut out all of life beside. Then,

"No-o-o. Oh, I'm sorry Mark—I'm afraid—not quite—"

They'd go into brief chatter of tone and tint, and effects required, until Tanya's "Do you mind—too much—?" would be cut off by

Mark's swift "No! No, I don't mind."

Off Mark would go, and be back again fifteen minutes later with another board. I couldn't see the difference between them, but I don't have Tanya's eye.

No, nor Mark's! He was as anxious to have it right as she was—even though that "right" existed only in an artistic confidence. I don't know how long this had been going forward before I reached there. I saw him come four times.

The fourth time, I knew he had it, and knew before she said so. He just stood there, smiling, knowing—I saw it in his eyes. Tanya swung around and saw it in his hand.

"Oh, Mark!" she said, and clasped her hands between her knees, and shivered, as with pleasure, or a casting off of weariness. "That's it! Oh, Mark."

"I thought it was."

He glanced down at the board in his paint-splashed hand, with a smile which was almost shy, and all unguarded; then, the dark eyes luminous with lack of sleep and with satisfaction, Mark looked back at her. Fine eyes, these, and for once not defensive, and in that moment Mark stood open to the world, and to Tanya! A shade of paint, to match with an idea, and he had caught it. They both understood. It was a warm and lovely moment, there between the two.

Across a nation—indeed, across two nations—others are discovering these works, and requests for displays of the props created by Mark and his department pour in from museums and universities—more requests than the theatre can grant. They are wanted to highlight the periods they were made to illustrate, but even more as examples of a modern, active art.

They even startle some of those who use them.

When Coriolanus becomes consul, the event is symbolically represented by his taking his seat in the consular chair, and holding the rod of office.

This rod, designed by Tanya and executed by Mark, is a golden pole four feet high, topped by a golden eagle. That eagle was created by Mark, right down to the final feather. The feathers were made of felt, then gilded, and the eagle was about ten inches high. Every time I saw that bird, I thought of Shelley's lines: "An eagle alit one moment may sit, In the light of his golden wings."

The consular chair is on the tumpsty, with its back toward the ramp entrance. It is customary to move the props into rehearsal as they are completed, to give the actors the feel of them. Paul Scofield was not familiar with Stratford's props.

For this rod of office they were using a broomstick, and one day during rehearsal of that scene, the real one was completed. Paul was already in the scene, seated in the chair and holding the rod of office. Mark came up the ramp behind him with the real one, and Gary Krawford, custodian of the rod, reached up and twitched the broomstick. Paul opened his hand and Gary replaced the false prop with the real one.

Coriolanus is supposed to hold the rod all too negligently; so Paul, involved in rehearsal, did not look around. He, of course, knew the real prop had been set in his hand; but he listened to the speeches from across the stage as he was supposed to, until the time came for him to rise. At that point, his hand swung forward, and the golden eagle flashed within his sight. He stared at it, and the eagle stared back.

"Saw you Aufidius?" said the prompter; this was Paul's next line, but nothing happened.

"Saw you Aufidius?" louder. Still nothing. It was seldom Paul needed a prompt, and when he received one, he always said "Thank you." This time, nothing. Just he and that eagle, all alone in a golden glow. The cast moved, and smiled, and even Michael grew puzzled.

"What is it, Paul?" he called. "Is it too much?"

"Too much? No! It's beautiful!" And he lifted a hand and ran one finger along the eagle's uplifted wing.

"What was the line?" asked Michael, who has seen Stratford's props before now.

"Saw you Aufidius?" said Paul and the prompter together. "Sorry, Michael. Thank you," and the rehearsal was on again.

Mark did not see the moment; it's a pity that he missed it.

In the final production, Coriolanus' negligent view of the consularship, until he loses it, is epitomized by the fact that as soon as he thinks of Aufidius he forgets that rod of office and drops it carelessly off the tumpsty, while Gary Krawford jumps to catch it as it falls. The second is effective. It always gets a quick gasp from the watchers.

It *should* be effective. It would take a king-size negligence to toss that rod away.

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MICHAEL Langham clings tenaciously to the quaint notion that William Shakespeare knew what he was about.

All you have to do is hear a half dozen critics and a dozen scholars discuss some of Shakespeare's lesser plays, to discover that every time he wrote something which wasn't *Hamlet*, they know what he intended to do better than he knew himself. Even expert directors fall into this trap occasionally, and when Shakespeare slips, in their estimation, they fix him up with their own witty additions. Not in words! Anybody who has tried to fence with Will Shakespeare on his own ground early discovers that there he'd best be left alone. But if the lines seem blurry or Elizabethan, or just confusing, they're apt to cover them up with all kinds of stage devices and gimcracks.

Love's Labour's Lost is a play which positively invites such actions. It takes terrific mental powers even to figure out what some of it is about, and takes a yet more extraordinary faith in both Shakespeare and his audience, to allow him to tell these particular jokes. Even the ditherings about love, which are plentiful and articulate, are of a different love, differently phrased, from that of the television era. It is very easy to have the four sets of lovers played as ridiculous, and thus to attempt to demonstrate that one has an emotional maturity much greater than theirs.

But Michael Langham does not try to prove himself brighter than Shakespeare. He may change the era of costume, as he did in *Coriolanus*, but once he gets the play onstage, he lets the author tell the story without trying to prove that he himself could have done a better job.

In the case of *Love's Labour's Lost*, this was an act of faith, in which he was abetted by every stroke of Tanya's able pen.

Four men decide to devote themselves to fasts and study; four

pretty girls will wrench them away from their academic ways. It would have been very easy to show that the director thought the men were being silly, and to show the audience he thought so, long before the four men knew it. The four are all too often played as caricatures.

Michael, with a line-up of Leo Ciceri, John Colicos, Peter Donat, and Gary Krawford, chose to set them afoot with all their powers and let them be romantic, let them day-dream, let their own gaiety, when irrepressible, lead the only laughter at their expense. The audience could laugh with them, and not at them; which is the way that Shakespeare told the tale.

The four actors went into this situation whole-heartedly. They are powerful men, all four, and they turned their academic high jinks into the result of young enthusiasm, great enthusiasm, rather than a retirement from the world.

The rustics remained rustics, and a bouncing good time they had of it, too, as the chief among them were Kate Reid and Eric Christmas, and Kate likes nothing better than a chance to get into country garb, dishevelled wig over her own red hair, and giggle and ogle about the stage. She and Eric were in vivid rusts and browns, and added a glow of their own to operations whenever they appeared.

The pedants were pedants, but again the director did not make fun of them. He let them be earnest about their own extravagances, even as you and I. And he! Their comedy bits were partly technique, but mostly the comedy which Shakespeare had implanted there.

The first scenes belong to the men, to the students and Don Armado, and then in a rush the girls come on. They are a vivacious bevy—Joy Parker, Zoe Caldwell, Mary Anderson, and Michael Learned. (Yes, her name is really Michael. She is the wife of Peter Donat, mother of two sons; and Peter sometimes calls his pretty young wife “big Mike”.) Michael Langham gave this charming quartet a chance to run and move and flutter beautifully, to sink down in a swirl of skirts on the steps, to gather in a whispering group, pretty heads together, and go off in gales of merriment at their reluctant cavaliers. Even in dusty rehearsal skirts, these rushings about had a singular grace.

With them was the only wholly affected character on stage, their messenger, Boyet. Douglas Rain played this role, and he had himself

a picnic with it, from the very first day he rehearsed. He found it a happy contrast to his sterner Wolsey role; but beyond that it was a chance to do something he can do, from private wit, exceptionally well. There's nothing of the affected, nothing whatsoever, about Doug Rain in private life, but he is a tease and a mimic. He does love to laugh to the point of helplessness. Boyet, despite the affectation, spends his time setting up jokes for the girls, and reporting back and forth between the two groups. As a result he has a chance to mimic one to the other, and not only a chance but a need to go into gales of merriment at their expense.

Dougie's pointed sense of style told him how to highlight these bits to dazzling brightness. The fit of laughter he staged on the balcony in one scene quite regularly reduced the Company and observers to a contagious fit of the giggles—exactly the effect intended upon the audience, once the Company had been forced under stern control.

The other role, strangely separate from all of these, was that of Don Armado, "a fantastical Spaniard" attached to the king's court. Paul Scofield had played this role at Stratford-upon-Avon years ago; and, having seen what he could do as the active, passionate hero of *Coriolanus*, it was beyond me, initially, why he was willing to play Don Armado again.

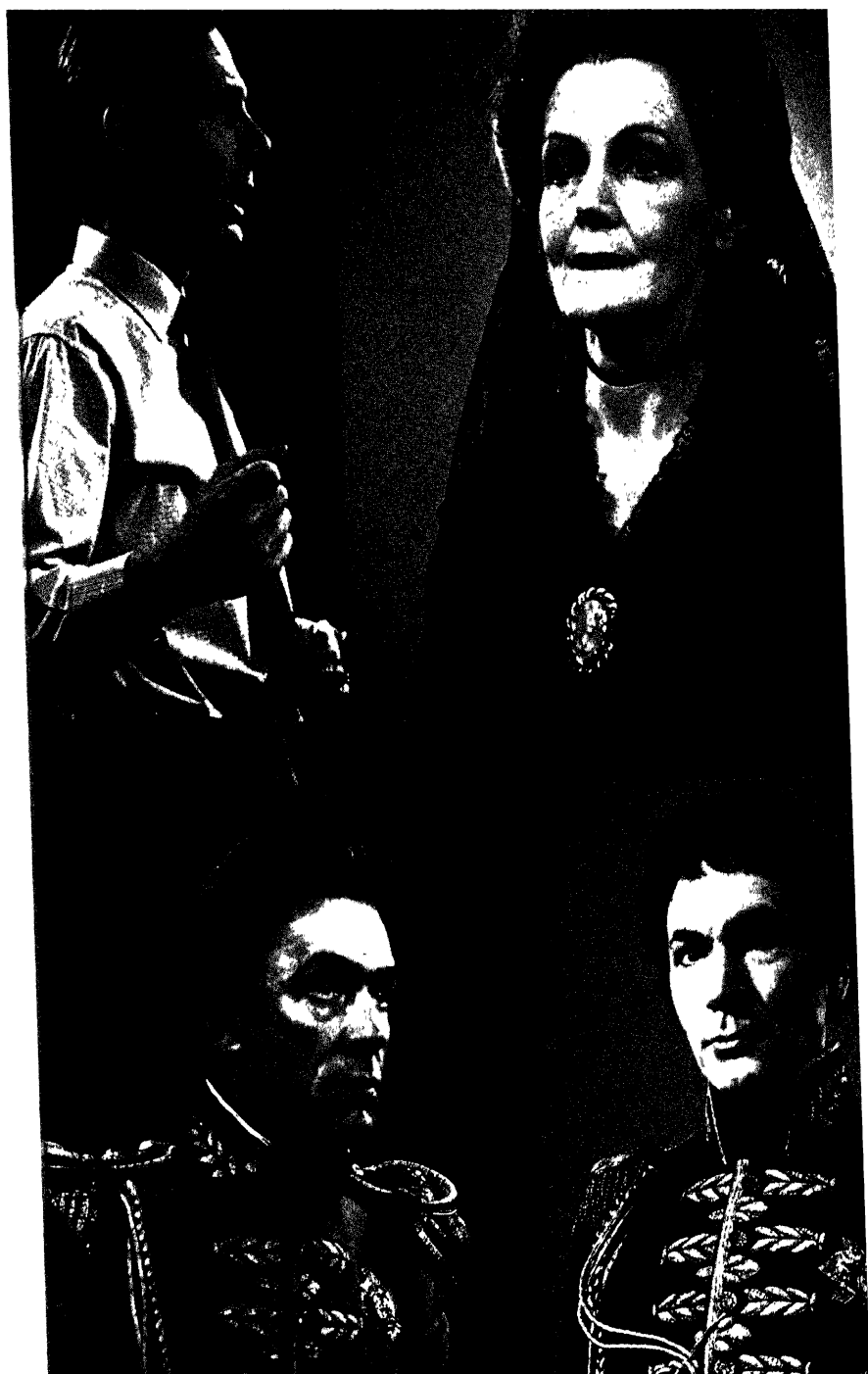
It was beyond several others, also. In the earliest days in which conversation about *Love's Labour's* was considered sporting—and by this I mean the week when Michael had, and Paul Scofield had not,

Above, Michael Langham, Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival, at work.

Eleanor Stuart as Volumnia in Coriolanus: ". . . the voice and authority were what hypnotized me."

Below at left, Paul Scofield: "One could see him arranging the picture . . . Coriolanus in one of his granite moods."

At right, John Colicos as Aufidius, the "lion that I am proud to hunt".





arrived—in those days it was generally agreed around the green-room that this “rarest of all actors” must have taken it simply to show that he could play an eccentric on the side.

Then came the first entrance as Don Armado, and everybody who saw it swerved upstairs later, still pop-eyed. His physical control is fantastic, even to actors; and it showed as such on that first entrance, book in hand, not yet knowing the lines. His hands had aged, his feet had aged, his attitude had aged, and his face had grooved into lines, not of expression alone, but of years and character—lines which it could and did hold steadily hour by hour, automatically, while various expressions played across his face.

Someone said to Samuel Johnson that David Garrick’s face was extraordinarily lined, for one so young.

“It should be, sir,” said Dr. Johnson. “No man has ever given his face more wear and tear.”

Paul Scofield seems to be a natural heir to Garrick; although he wore beard and make-up later as Don Armado, the facial lines were there from the beginning, and were the result of his own muscular control. He was two different men onstage in *Love’s Labour’s* and in *Corio*, even in early rehearsal. So clear was his grasp of this physical difference that he could be playful within its framework; and playful Paul is, at any and all opportunities.

I remember one day when, seated on the floor midstage as Don Armado, he was rehearsing a long speech in which he presumably fights a duel with Cupid. Paul and/or Michael had thought to highlight this by having Don Armado actually flourish his sword. Even that flourish was a totally different one from the grip and handling which he gave to his sabre in the other play.

However, in this early rehearsal, he was running the speech without the sword in hand, but with the hand held high and clasped as if the prop were there; the fingers were closed about an imaginary sword hilt.

Douglas Campbell as Henry VIII, “the very picture of a Holbein-Tudor-Jackson prince”, and “Queen Katharine, Kate Reid, an actress of tremendous, glowing power”.

In course of trying out his lines, he momentarily forgot that this waving hand held a sword, and suddenly illustrated one line with an open-handed gesture. The speech went on, and then suddenly Don Armado's eyes—not Paul Scofield's, but Don Armado's—widened in realization that he had committed a frightful *faux pas*. Up went the hand full reach, while the lines continued, and the hand just managed to clutch and retrieve, in midair, the presumably escaping sword. He went through the speech with no comment. There was a sweet smile of relief when he caught it, but all of this was totally in character. The hand did not revert to being Paul Scofield's. The face did not wear the expression of an actor chagrined by his own fault. He had the physical Don Armado down so pat that he could play with him, any time he wished to; and this is a feat to be observed with respect.

Vic Polley, Administrative Manager of the theatre, happens to have a quality, unique there, which I think he has managed to keep secret from most of his colleagues. He is pure audience. If I want to know something about audience reaction, I don't go to the actors (they are untrustworthy as audience), but I wait to hear from Vic Polley. Some comment of his beginning, "I don't know a thing about plays, I just know what I like, but—" will cast advance enlightenment on the whole season.

Vic, who had been a firm admirer of Paul Scofield the man since the day of his arrival, had yet reserved judgment on Paul Scofield the actor. He was waiting to be shown. Then one day he strode up from the auditorium, grinning.

"I've just seen a bit of Scofield in *Love's Labour's*. I don't know a thing about plays. I only know what I like, but it seems to me this is the best thing I've ever seen. I like it as well as anything I've seen on stage at Stratford. In fact, better than any. Have you seen it?"

I allowed that I had. I also allowed that it wasn't much of a part in the play as a whole, just an in-and-out thing, and so on; and Vic, dutifully, looked sad. I agreed with him. It was fascinating, but for many of us the fascination lay in Paul's private method of playing, which would obviously (we decided) be far above the general public's head. Several of us were audibly sorry about Paul being wasted, but Mr. Scofield himself seemed to bear up bravely enough.

In the main roles (Paul was starred as Don Armado, but it is not

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a lead role), the two lead couples were shaping up so differently and from such different directions that the two modes of playing, and Michael's feat in bringing them together, formed an educational sequence which any drama school could use.

John Colicos and Zoe Caldwell, with the liveliest roles and also livelier by nature, flung themselves in at the outset with such joyous abandon that Michael spent all his time trying to mute them down to the size of the play. John's was a physical abandon. He would stride every chance he got. This often meant he moved before a line, and even with his powerful voice the line would be lost. If I am not mistaken, he considered quite a few of them worth losing. As most of us simply liked to watch him move, we were quite willing to give the author the go-by. Michael did not see it this way, and was continually reining back his mettlesome star. Berowne's role, thereby, grew stronger and stronger. Since there is no way to cover or inhibit John Colicos' real vitality, clarifying the role simply gave it greater force.

Zoe's initial extravagances were physical also, but in a slightly different line. Her original delivery of some of Rosaline's lines would have done credit to Mae West at her zenith, with a dash of current Marilyn Monroe tossed in. It was absolutely paralyzing, and I may say that the cast were entranced.

Michael managed to keep his head.

I remember one day, when Zoe was leaning against a pillar delivering a line about Berowne, and her will to torture that lover, which none of the watchers felt in the slightest doubt that she could do. The sequence ended with the line, "That he should be my fool, and I his fate."

She was dressed in bulky corduroy shirt, snug slacks, and thong sandals, with her newly black hair tied back. She had acquired a chiffon kerchief, which she had been winding around a finger to illustrate her thoughts. The kerchief, a clear cerise chiffon, looked so out of place with her get-up that it caused tremors in itself. Her use of it was another thing again. She ran through the lines of the speech, slithered up to the front post, leaned back against it, delivered "That he shall be my—fool—" with an anticipatory delight which lifted the word "fool" into the category of words seldom spoken aloud on a stage; then, eyes wide and imagination rampant, added, "and I—his—"

At this point, down went the eyelids, between the teeth went the lower lip, and she leaned out from the post until only the back of her head was against it, rubbing up and down with the sinuous pleasure of an appealing cat, while the whole long kerchief pulled slowly through a ring of her thumb and forefinger, and an expressive face thought a whole series of conjectural roles she could play to him, until she belatedly allowed the final word, "fate". Even this came out as a low purr, which made it doubtful what the word was, and the conjectural variants were remarkable and precise.

It could'nt have been more than a three-second stage-wait, but it seemed a fascinating eternity. It completely ravished the minds of her small audience, and I use the word in its strictest denotation. Nobody looked at anybody, for all were engrossed in their own flaming thoughts. Boyet rushed on in his entrance, to find a rapt Company onstage, grown exceedingly vague concerning their own lines.

The scene ran through; or rather, jerked through.

No comment from Michael till the finish. He ran down onstage to give a few swift directives, including, tossed negligently over one shoulder, "Zoe, dear. A touch less affectation in the voice."

Zoe laughed; belted out a great merry peal of laughter.

"Do you want me to cut the kerchief, too?" she asked.

Michael, straight-faced, remarked, "We'll see, later." (In point of fact, they did cut it, but it made no difference. Zoe never played it again with quite such abandon, but the idea came across. It was generally agreed that Berowne was heading for an interesting future. Quite a few envied him.)

"And to think," mourned a deep voice, when voices were recovered, "that they used her for tragedy, in England!"

They did; and she was good at it, too.

As with all of the individual or playful asides in rehearsal, Zoe's gained credence and power because she is a disciplined professional. She has a vocal range and inflection rare in an actress, and she was doing this purring because she could do it, not because she couldn't do anything else.

With this Company, that makes the difference. As in some formal societies only those completely certain of good manners dare to flout them; so here, only those with full proficiency may take liberties.

That voice of Zoe's later played triumphant tricks in *L.L.L.*, to the

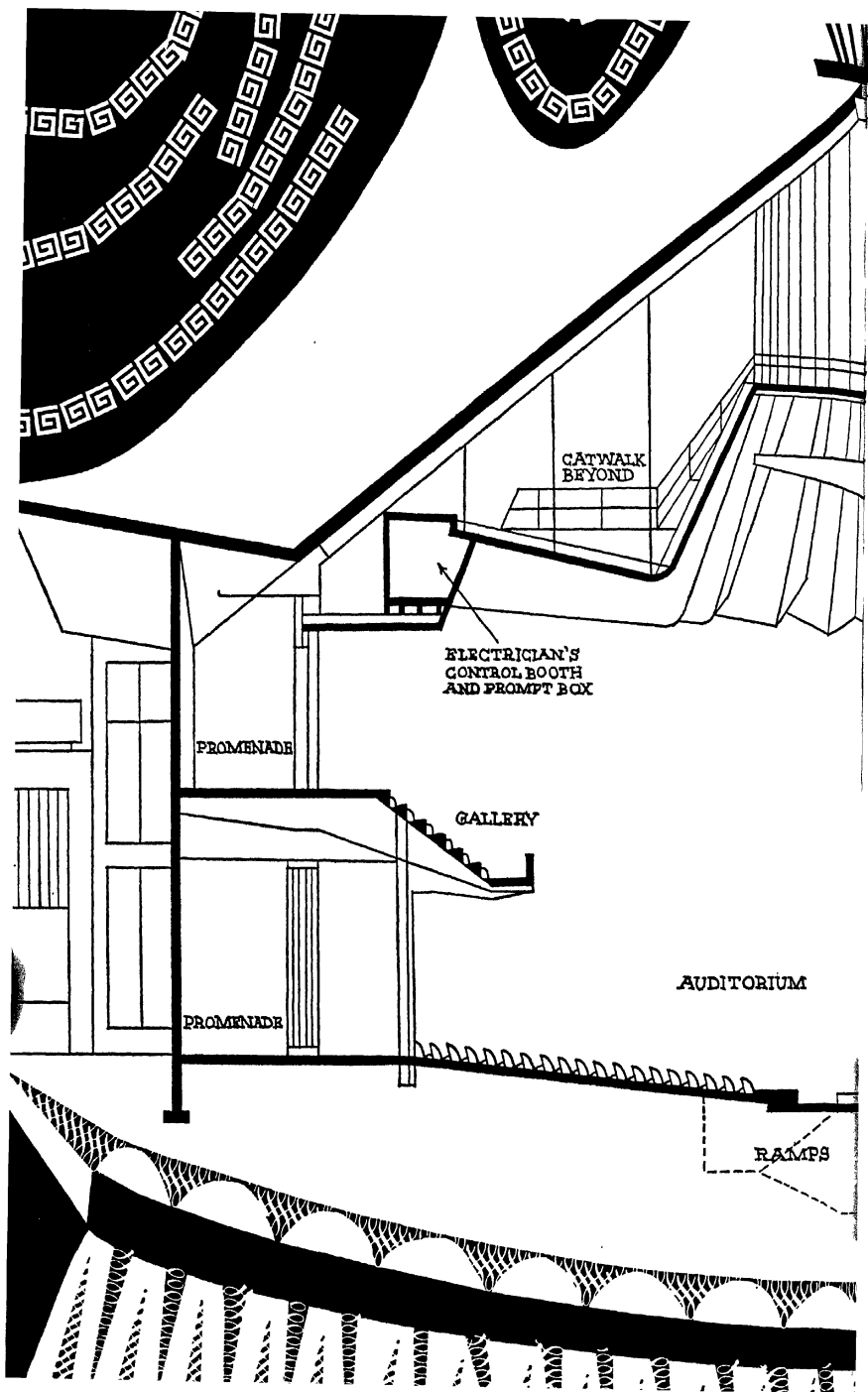
delight of the hearers. She learned to take off Berowne's accent completely, and could drop to his baritone for a brief, telling phrase. She could adopt the Princess' accent and mannerisms when the play demanded that she represent her, and had a marvellous, teasing range, deliberate, piquant, when she had a chance to make fun of the king.

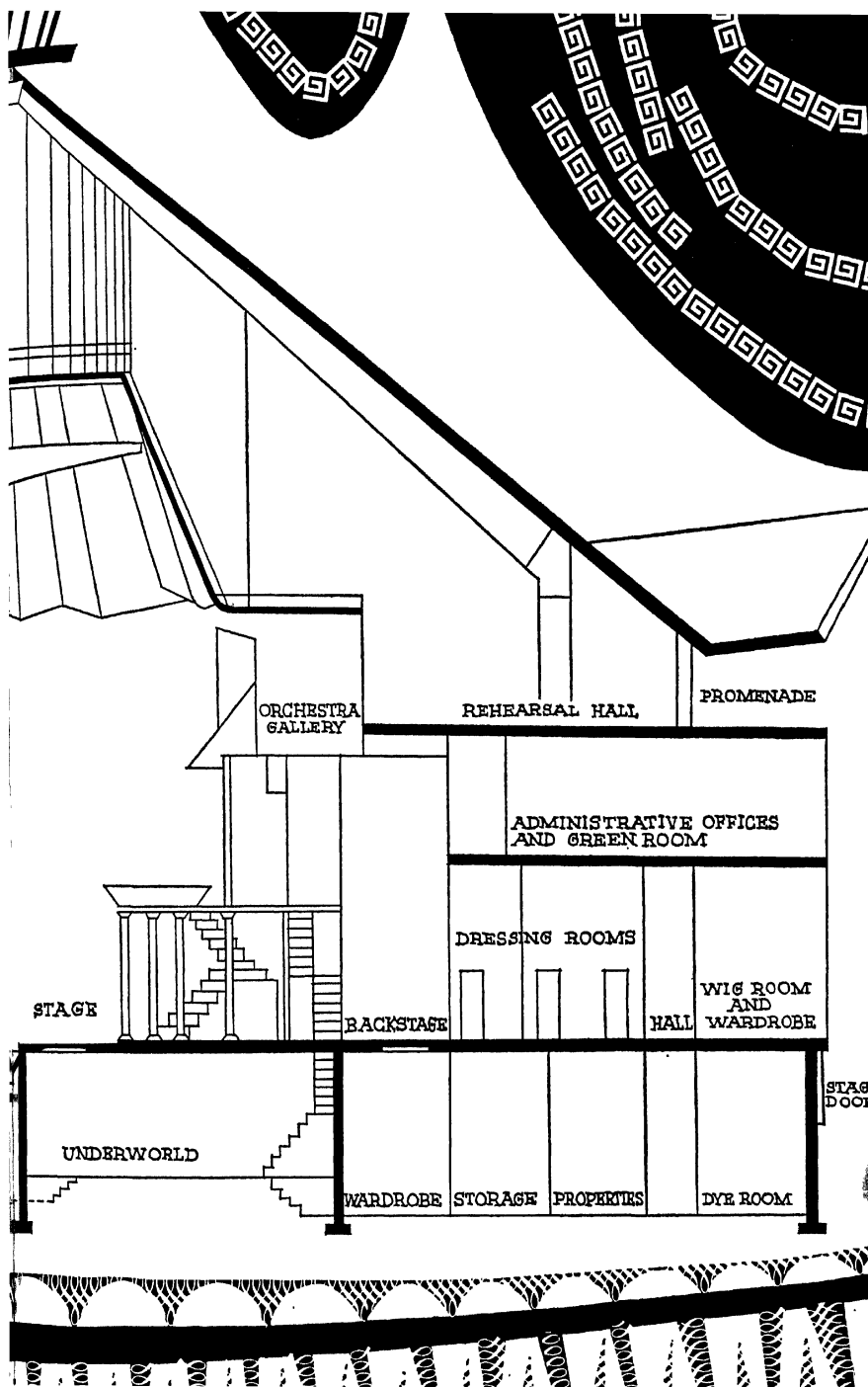
She also moves superbly on a stage, and I mean aside from prowling. These scenes often demanded much racing about. Michael wanted from all the young people a picture of youth in its joyous spring, when physical restrictions on their actions should be nil. He sent them swirling about the stage at a great clip. Zoe's ability to land at a certain point at a certain second and look as if it had just happened, was an asset to the whole play.

There is one hunting scene, the ladies armed with bows and arrows, in which Boyet and the ladies tease her, and bar her escape with outstretched bows. She races all over the stage to get past them, while they regroup to bar her way. Only a tremendously skilled actress, with a good director, could have played that scene, and delivered lines on the move, and had them not only heard, but comprehended. I later heard from one of the audience what fun that scene was to watch: "It was all so spontaneous; they were obviously just going after her!" It is the greatest compliment the scene could be given. That spontaneity was the result of discipline, technique, and a great professional pride—plus whatever incidental orchestration the needs of the night itself might indicate.

While Berowne and Rosaline were overdoing everything in sight, in order to find those actions which would give strength to their roles, the King of Navarre and the Princess of France—Leo Ciceri and Joy Parker—were working from an absolutely opposite direction. They were getting the technical bits down first, then building the characters slowly. This may sound duller, but it is apt to build the firmer character. Joy and Leo—I connect them in this, as with Zoe and John, purely because of their roles, for none of them had worked together before—are different in their approach except for that detail of starting quietly. Both were brilliantly cast, for both can be regal on stage. Playful they could be, and were, but she remained a princess, he a king.

It is difficult to give a clear picture of Joy at work. The vividest





mental pictures one has of her, pre-opening, are with Paul. She is very much Mrs. Paul Scofield, a slender, beautiful, rather elfin Mrs. Paul, and they are a delight to watch together. With him, her expressions are swift and eager and she shows forth a very happy, very vivid self.

The second she steps onstage, in rehearsal, however, she becomes completely businesslike—pleasant to work with, but entirely concentrated. She takes direction easily, is clearly at home upon a stage, and her performance quietly builds up from day to day; but it gives scant early indication of what it is going to be by opening. In the interim, she's sweetly and silently forming it in her own mind.

It was by either good fortune or good foresight that she was playing opposite such a technician as Leo, and with an actor as at ease upon that stage as Douglas Rain. Otherwise, this quiet build-up could have thrown them. A New-World company is vital and energetic, technique is just the overlay; they are still feeling out new methods and new energies, and they like to have other actors lace into their own roles early, to give them an indication of what they've got. These were Joy's first days in the New World, and she did not know this, so she very wisely held to her own mode of building a performance, the quiet one which she did know.

She probably doesn't know, for instance, that she scared the life out of half the theatre by declining to rehearse at her full vocal range. She spoke her lines quietly for the first weeks, feeling for their meaning. In an empty theatre one could not catch them in the eleventh row.

Michael would not have allowed one of his Canadian actors to rehearse in any such fashion, and well they knew it; but he knew it to be her method, and so he gave her scope.

Even in rehearsal, it is difficult for an actor to respond with full volume to a softly spoken word. This was the situation which Leo and Dougie were up against. You can catch the effect in daily conversation; speak loudly and firmly on any topic and let a very soft voice interject a comment, and the whole fabric of the conversation will give way.

Luckily, Leo's voice, as well as his acting, are driven by a strong and domineering mind. It's domineering mostly over himself. Leo is decisive, and an intellectual actor—not in the vague sense, but in

the sense of understanding what he's doing and where he's heading, and being able to do that which he intends.

In *Love's Labour's*, Leo came up slowly but powerfully. In between his scenes, one could see him, standing in an aisle or stretched out in a front seat, thinking; always thinking. Where his thoughts led him, it was hard to conjecture; but one place it led him was to as clear a knowledge of the powers of that stage as any one who has ever moved upon it—yes, or directed for it—has achieved.

13....

CORIOLANUS was the show on which the artistic success or failure of the season was bound to turn, for the comedy usually does well, and *Henry VIII* was already leading the advance sale, partly because a lot of people clearly expected to come and watch Dougie Campbell romping with his six wives. It was shaping up with a speed which suited everybody but Michael Langham.

Jack Hutt remarked, with a dubious frown, that Michael seemed to think *Coriolanus* was behind—but! This “but” would have illustrated most other opinions, for the rest of us were being dazzled out of our judgment of the whole by two or three of the parts.

Eleanor Stuart, who was growing more and more tense offstage about her role, and better and better onstage, partly because of the tenseness, had become a pleasure to watch. Although she retained an amused horror at brow-beating “that nice man”, it had become so obvious that that nice man flourished beneath such brow-beating that this had ceased to inhibit her. Leon Major gave a huge assist in this, for Leon, aiding Michael on *Coriolanus*, proved to have a way with individual actors. I remember one day he sat with Eleanor in the green-room, discussing women like Volumnia—he showing far greater approval of them than she would. I began to gain an impression that Leon’s world had been ornamented by many boisterous ladies domineering over their violent sons.

On another occasion, however, I had received an equally firm conviction that Leon’s world was full of tribunes battling the mighty for the rights of the people; so it began to occur to me that this population sprung mostly straight out of Leon’s active mind. It’s an observant mind, with a tremendous sense of people. In fact, I think it positively aches for chances to express those observations and deductions with which it is so plentifully stored.

John Colicos continued to be so much fun to watch onstage that

I wondered how Michael kept his sense of balance with him. The phrase "animal energy" has been so misused to explain what people have, who haven't got brains, that I don't dare apply it to John without qualification; but he has human energy, physical variety, guided by a healthy, well-stored intellect. Far more important for an actor, that energy comes across. It is impossible to ignore him onstage. He engenders an electric excitement; and, as it would never occur to him to depend upon that excitement, he is forever doing a lot of extras in rehearsal to express those things which he can express—almost—by standing still. As a result, Michael Langham had to spend all his time putting on the brakes.

John was better aware of this braking than anyone else, and far more gleeful about it. "He's a director in whom I can have confidence, and that's half the game," said John, even when working with Michael stirred his emotions to a froth. He was sometimes cast into a half-humorous anger, like the anger of a good chess player who for the sake of his game has deliberately pitted himself against a better one. He loses, as he expects to lose, and his anger is part of the learning; but, since he courted it, it's shot through with delight.

Michael, a judge of character when it's not too simple (simple characters baffle him), was riding John hard in both plays, and some of the demands he made on him were close to funny. John answered the demands.

"You're taking your fences before you to get them. Softly, now!"

"That's right. Smoulder. But smoulder standing still."

"John, be involved in the scene—watchful involvement—but don't take it over."

"That should be a leap into action out of inaction. The leap's very good, but we haven't seen the inaction yet."

As he framed himself to these directions, his roles grew stronger and stronger, and as Aufidius he had a passionate power daily more exciting to watch.

One of the reviewers later announced that the fierce Aufidius stared with "eyes as red as the tail lights of a Ford". This bit was greeted with appreciative hoots of laughter in the green-room, for John's glare did attain to that burning quality.

There was just one thing that Michael had trouble to get him to do, and that was to tramp on Coriolanus. The last scene of *Corio-*

lanus definitely demands that Aufidius tramp on the dead body of his enemy, killed, not through his skill, but by plot. It is imperative to the scene that he do so, because Claude Bede, a Volscian senator in state of shock, has to say, quote, tread not upon him, unquote.

Paul Scofield, an actor who automatically does in full those things which some actors work up to only by degrees, had been taking his full death fall from the beginning. From a standing position, he had been going suddenly rigid, half turning, and slamming down full length on the floor. These falls are part of an actor's craft, and novices or the timid are apt to cheat by bending their knees and crumpling, instead of going full over. Scofield, so easily a master of himself that these matters look easy, simply spun on his toe the first day and went down straight and full.

There was a day after that when I wondered if he bore home bruises, because a blocking question arose as to where he ought to fall. He took the fall some several times—I won't say patiently, I'm not too certain he is patient—but it looked to be almost joyously. He gets his fun out of the darndest things!

As the funeral cortège was to go off down the left ramp, it was finally decided he must fall head towards that ramp, and the right arm had to fall wide so that Aufidius would come close enough to him to do said tramping.

The arm had to fall outward for another reason. Four of the actor soldiers, Aufidius included, had to lift him gracefully and solemnly to carry him offstage. This meant lifting him from floor level to shoulder level; and there were 180 pounds of Paul Scofield—precious cargo every ounce. The Board of Governors would have taken a dim view of having it dropped. The doing of this, and the doing of it in the mood of the scene, was quite a feat. It was just as well that the soldiers should not stagger, and certainly imperative that the corpse should not wince. It had to be well done, because an audience stirred by emotion is ready to giggle at any mishap, to give that emotion vent. One or two of the early tries at this would have made good comedy routines, except that they were kept from being comic by the knowledge of all the actors that this was a serious part of their business. Since they had to carry him head foremost down the steps and ramp, there was even the matter of making sure he didn't slip off their shoulders.

It was finally settled by having John Colicos and John Vernon each place a hand under his shoulders, two other soldiers take his ankles, and all four lift him onto their own shoulders as they knelt; then they stood up. His arms fell free so the two in front could catch them across their chests and have a grip to make certain he did not slide either way. The physical control of the five involved was extraordinary. The action looked all but effortless onstage. John Colicos sprained his right wrist doing it during dress rehearsal; but that was unimportant, a hazard of the trade. The doctor suggested he stop doing whatever he'd been doing; but he went on hoisting his enemy, and as soon as possible went back to fencing, too.

But about the tramping.

The attitude of the Company toward Paul Scofield was admiration for his daily skill and cheery humour. It was not star-struck. He was an actor like themselves; a special actor, most agreed, but—another actor.

John, who was particularly pleased with Paul, certainly stood in no awe of him; but, perhaps from some residue of an earlier star-struck state, he couldn't bring himself to step on him. He could help kill him; he enjoyed helping to kill him, and did so with a glorious vindictiveness. Down would go Paul, like an oak tree crashing, over would dash Aufidius—an Aufidius in deck pants, terrycloth T-shirt, and sneakers, all blindingly white—to stand on one foot beside Paul and balance the other four inches above his chest. Since the passionate words of hatred would issue unabated from a few feet above this dangling sneaker, the effect was gorgeously incongruous.

Michael Langham does not believe in half rehearsing anything, and a couple of times in notes after rehearsal, he mentioned that John should step on Paul. Two mentions are over-many from Michael, and came a day when down went Paul, across came John, and right up onto the stage came Michael like a shot.

"Tramp on him!" he said. "There are four inches of fresh air showing."

"Right on him?" asked John, foot still aloft.

"Right on him!" said Michael, looking him in the eye.

Below them, Paul roused himself from the dead and flashed a brief "On me?" expression. John looked down at the well-dressed Paul and said, "I don't like to put a foot on his shirt." Paul quietly straightened

his shirt and tie and became a horizontal dandy, unnoted by Michael, who did not choose to note.

"It will launder," said Michael. "Take it from your cross."

Paul ceased playing, threw his arm out to position, and relapsed. John returned to the other side of the stage, then dashed across and tentatively placed a toe on Paul's stomach. Paul picked up the toe and raised it to his chest. Michael was ceasing to be entertained.

"Stand on him!" he ordered. This really brought a reaction from the corpse.

"Stand on him?" asked John, and snatched his foot away as if he might be tempted.

"Is he to *stand* on me?" demanded Paul, a little plaintively.

Nobody quite argues with Michael. John looked desperate, thought of it, and noticed the expression in Michael's eye. "I don't want to hurt him," said John. Paul nodded high approval of this point of view.

"Why not?" asked Michael. "He has finished his performance. A dead body is a prop, so use it. Back to the fight and the fall."

The fun of this horseplay is partly that it ceases with such abruptness when it is done. The two went into their fight again, Paul did his fall, and this time did get a foot firmly planted on his chest. I always thought it hurt John to do it. It didn't seem to hurt Paul much, but at one point there was an earnest private rehearsal between them, on the most effective placement of sole on wishbone, and such. Ah, these perfectionists!

The physical interaction and discipline which it takes to master these technical bits of their trade often fascinate me even more than the emotional power they later add to the scenes. Any amateur can do a death scene well; witness the popularity of *Camille*. Death scenes are a cinch. But I challenge you to find an amateur, or even most professionals, who can do a death scene well when he is caught up in a network of technical requirements, split-second timing, and accuracy of direction of fall cut to a matter of inches. This takes experience and technique, and both in mighty quantities. Often, when one refers to technique in acting, the hearer looks disappointed, as if the magic were gone, as if it meant that there was a set of mechanical motions which could be taught, and inspiration mattered not at all. That is not it. Most brilliant acting is compact of inspiration, personality, and projection; but it gets nowhere in a play, unless

that structure of technique underlies it. Technique is not a mechanical means of avoiding acting; it is a control and knowledge which frees an actor from those physical and vocal limitations which otherwise would interfere with every role he acts.

Douglas Campbell was now doing a quietly beautiful job in *Coriolanus* as Menenius, Coriolanus' patrician friend. For him to be magnificent is customary. The quietness was more surprising, and showed forth the full range of his skill. Happily for the audience, the role of Menenius has, or can be played with, humour and heart in lavish quantities. That's the way that Dougie was issued with them both.

There was one scene—the one in which Menenius, pleading for Rome to Coriolanus, has been rejected—where Dougie was so moving, even in early rehearsal, that he hypnotized two enemy soldiers into a state of trance. Al Kozlik and Lewis Gordon, muskets pointed at him, had to be jolted out of their traitorous sympathy.

"Laugh at the old fool!" ordered Michael. "Poke fun at him. This silly Menenius is nothing to you. You're Volscians, not Romans. Show it!"

Al Kozlik cast upon his director a half smile of compassionate horror and continued looking on Menenius pityingly. Lewis Gordon tried to laugh at him, with a sort of side apology to Dougie in the grin.

"Don't pick up his mood," said Michael a bit more sharply. "You're letting him dominate you. Play against him. This man has threatened you. He's a pompous oaf to your eyes. Stand there and jibe at him."

The two boys tried. Al pushed a bayonet in Dougie's direction with all the attack that's used in toasting marshmallows, and Lewis Gordon tried desperately to sneer. They went back to the beginning and Dougie's beautiful voice and control took over. The sneers disappeared; the bayonets wavered away. He gave his speech in isolated splendour, until of a sudden a slender man ran down centre aisle and burst up onto the stage. Nobody has ever snatched a scene from Michael Langham.

"It's the audience we want to be sorry for him," he informed his soldiers. "Not you! You should be looking at him as a stupid old Roman." Al gazed at him reproachfully. "Make fun of him. Laugh

at him. Poke him if you want to." He swung a bayonet point toward Dougie. Lewis Gordon didn't look as if he could. "You're not looking at him as Menenius," Michael accused them. "You're standing here, watching Douglas Campbell do a touching scene." Dougie smiled demurely. "Well, don't!" said Michael. "The audience will be sorrier for him, if you hate him. You've got to jeer at him to give him his chance."

He had struck a note they understood and agreed with. The jeering and laughter grew so obstreperous later that it took some toning down, but in the meantime Dougie had been forced, to his pleasure, to work against it. That brief bit was eventually one of the most telling in the play.

But *Coriolanus* is Coriolanus' play, and the play was still Paul Scofield's, and growing to be more so, day by day.

It is not alone when actors refuse to pick up one another's moods, but play against one another, that the audience is best served. The same thing often—not always, but often—occurs between director and star. Both need to be strong, but they are strong in different ways, in different spheres.

In the case of *Coriolanus*, we had the weird situation of a powerful, violent play, reigned over by two very gentle gentlemen, who were apparently in the mildest of accord. The quietness of Paul Scofield and of Michael Langham, totally different in type, was never negative.

Michael's quietness, of course, becomes sharp, quick, commanding in rehearsal. There, he was the usual Michael, Stratford's Michael; and if the inner exhaustion sometimes made him swifter, sharper, than he would have been, why the Company simply speeded to his pace.

Paul's quietness is of a totally different sort. It never takes itself out in that quickness of Michael's, and it is warmer. Paul is a happier man. There are absolutely no bars between him and the world. He establishes an instant rapport with his audience, whether that audience consists of two thousand, or one individual. His quiet is a joyous quiet—indeed, I wonder why I use that word at all! Certainly it is not silence. The magnificent voice which serves him onstage is not muted to a whisper, off. The gestures are wide and expressive. He may sometimes be reticent, but never is withdrawn.

However, there is something in Paul which is baffling when one comes up against it too often. It's a quality which would be more familiar in a leader in government or business than in an actor. It is a retirement behind his own politeness, to give him rest from coping with the world.

When the trait appeared onstage, the results were strange. For several days, he would rehearse full out, so excitingly that we were all agog and stimulated, and nobody had much of conversation about anyone else. Then would come a day on which he would retire behind a shield of skill. And it would leave us all vaguely troubled, as the politeness could leave me. If he had had an off day, that would be nothing. All actors have off days. But his would not be an off day; it would be a cold day. It was almost as if he would unconsciously erect a barrier, as if he were indicating that all this he could do, without being personally involved at all. It was all the more puzzling as the results would be so superb that criticism seemed malicious.

It took Michael Langham—who had never directed Paul before, although he had long known him—about two weeks to get a line on this mannerism of his; and, once it was recognized, I imagine that it took him about twenty seconds to figure out how to strip that shield away.

At the first, when Michael, visibly ill, was rushing the play through its early sessions, and when Paul, arriving late, was learning the complex structure of a new stage, they worked in a unity which was beautiful to behold to get *Coriolanus* set. But in late May, when the framework had been built and the individual characters began to emerge, this unity was not quite so certain. A light began to show between them; just a thread of light at the beginning, but it widened day by day. There was never a rough word, never an open conflict, but something was occurring, and I am positive that Michael Langham was causing it to occur.

I forget just when I began to suspect it; I remember vividly the day when I knew for sure. The knowledge came with an expression of Paul's, onstage. He had just finished one of his major scenes, and Michael was shoring up some bits and pieces of the blocking which did not suit him. While so doing he began to build the production detail stronger, to make a major production highlight of a scene which should by rights have belonged to *Coriolanus*. Paul's head

turned sharply, he started to speak, but said nothing.

"All right, Paul?" asked Michael.

"Yes," said Paul. "Yes. Of course." He turned away. But in that turn I caught his expression. It was not temper, Paul never lost his temper; but it was anger, swift, clear anger, the first I had seen him show.

It disappeared from his features instantly. They ran the scene again. The crowds moved around Paul, but it did not matter. That scene belonged by right to Coriolanus, and Coriolanus quietly took it back again. Not by trickery; by inner power. There were no shields behind which Paul Scofield retired that day.

The second I saw it, I knew what Michael was up to. Paul may have thought this was his customary way of directing, but it was not. Michael has been known to form a whole production around a star who needed his help. He has been known to give him all the opportunities: being the only one to move, centre stage, top level, benefit of lights, and all. With stars who need it, he will do that.

But this one didn't need it. He needed something else. Something to work against. There wasn't an individual actor in that theatre who could seize a scene from him on his own terms; but Michael had another power—the production. He began to produce Paul Scofield right off the edge of that stage. He did not needle him as he did the others, but he tossed him tough situations, to see what he would do.

What he did, after about three days of stern conjecture, was suddenly shake himself, and come alive. Oh, he'd been pleasantly lively before now, but this was different. This was a shaking of his powers; and Paul Scofield extending himself is a glorious sight to see.

Coriolanus grew better, more powerful, in star's role and in production, every day. The very fabric of it developed a tensile strength, from being pulled taut two ways. But there was a danger. Michael and Paul were friends; yet now that line of light between them was visibly present. Michael might well win the battle, lose the war; might free a great performance, but thereby lose a friend.

The person caught in this cleft was Eleanor Stuart. Michael was driving Paul to give his own performance; but he directed Eleanor to the play as he saw it, toward a mother-son relationship which was very nearly Freudian in content—a sort of symbol mother to a symbol son.

It could have worked out beautifully. But onstage she was faced, as an individual, with an individual son. Coriolanus as played by Paul wasn't a symbol in the least sense. He was a man, a definite man, growing clearer every day.

Eleanor blamed herself in this dilemma. Paul might have aided her, had he been the discussing type, but he isn't. Michael might have, had he been certain what Paul was going to do. But with Paul building a character not to reach full size until dress rehearsal, and Michael directing a play which must set itself long before that, she was influenced two ways, then left to her own devices.

Her own devices were quite adequate. Eleanor is not an actress to be crushed. Set in a role which had been lifted away from the century which it best suited, she was ready to use her talents to play it with subtlety and skill. She has both. But one can't be effectively subtle onstage, two ways; and one certainly cannot be so without help. Her original tenseness had been a will to do what was expected of her. When she found that she was faced with two different expectations, one articulate and out front, and one silent, but onstage, she shook herself, stood a little straighter, shunted aside the tenseness and called forth another trait.

Sheer power. When talent is troubled, or skill cannot be used, some actors, and a few actresses, have a different quality to save them. Stage power is the only name for it. Used in some roles, it would be disaster. In Volumnia's, it suited very well.

It did not suit Eleanor, but she's a trouper. When she saw the dilemma she was caught in, she called upon that power, and it came. She literally bulldozed her way through scenes which she would greatly have preferred to play from skill. Whether she liked it or not, the effect was tremendous. Everyone knew how this woman subjugated her son!

To whom did *Coriolanus* owe most, to Paul Scofield or to Michael Langham? To what does the arrow owe its flight, to the bow or to the hand which bends the bow? The hand must have the skill, the knack, the know-how; but the power, the power is the quality inherent in the bow.

14

“I’VE spent the whole week-end ripping up broadloom,” said Alan Lund. He stretched lazily to indicate an exhaustion in which nobody believed. The ripping-up-broadloom remark had been illustrated by a beautiful whirl which looked as if he’d flourished it like a matador’s cape. I don’t doubt he had. Watching this dancer turning his muscles to household chores must be an illumination in itself.

Blanche and Alan Lund are the leading dance team in Canada. They’ve known each other since they were children. They joined the Navy together at eighteen, were married soon after, then went overseas and danced in the Navy show. While still with it, Blanche came down with polio, the crippling kind. She was paralyzed save for one arm.

The doctors said she might remain so; but Alan was having none of that. He settled down to help her get better, not merely to walk, but so that she could dance. Dance with him. She says that the fact that he kept using that phrase was a help from the beginning; that she knew she must do not only a little, but much. It took them a year to achieve even the walking, but once the muscles were in action, love and determination were able to do the rest.

Blanche claims it was all Alan’s determination, and she does a descriptive bit on him as a tyrant, her eyes shining with the telling. She did walk, she does dance. “And so they lived happily ever after.” They are the top dance team in their nation, they have two sons, a home, a dog, a cat, a success which they have built on their own talents, and a form of joy in each other found contagious by those they meet.

In 1960, Blanche and Alan Lund made their first visit to Stratford to stage the dances for *Romeo and Juliet* and *Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The next year, Blanche was having their third child, so Alan came alone. She was also, to her fury, having an allergy; hence the

rug-raising episode.

Blanches's tale of the merciless side of Alan, when driving others in the pursuit of art, became more than an anecdote among us. Along with the dance in *Henry VIII*, at which the King meets Anne Bullen, he was choreographing the *Coriolanus* battle scenes although the individual duels remained in Peter Needham's hands.

The 1800 dating of the costumes had forced the play into the time when officers carried sabres, but ordinary soldiers carried guns. The thoughts of volleys of musket shot racketing through the auditorium had never that I know of gained consideration; it is not looked upon as sporting to deafen an audience in Act I. But guns they must have, and battles they must fight, so Michael's decision had been in favour of having the music carry the sense of noise and violence, while the battles themselves were fought as balletic sequences.

Whenever I mention the word ballet, I expect someone to think I mean dancing on tiptoe in a tutu. I don't. In this case, it merely means that the soldiers of the Roman and the Volscian armies raced through three or four battle scenes so planned that their poses and motions gave the audience the visual impression of a fight. The drums took care of the question of musketry and battle sounds.

Alan Lund threw himself into this battle deal with even greater dash than that with which he tackled the dance. I believe it was his first battle; if so, that would be enough to account for his excitement over it. He did large amounts of research, discovering from every source available, including old prints, the poses which brought to the mind's eye a picture of the soldiers and the battles of the time. Then he came out to Stratford and proceeded to deploy his troops around the stage, and coach them in pace and movement towards the effect he wished to achieve.

The Stratford Company are an agile bunch, and the discipline by which they live does not allow of languor in any sense of the word; but the dashings to and fro, the flingings of themselves flat in the gutter for refuge, the risings and racings across the stage one second later, all were a new high in activity, even for them. At one point sixteen of them had to collide in the middle of the stage and have a bayonet fight. To have that many heavily armed men, most of them carrying muskets with fixed bayonets, of an overall length just over six feet, roiling around with an effect of violence, in a space eighteen

by fourteen feet, without any real casualties, is an achievement. If in doubt, let sixteen armed friends try it in your living-room.

"Alan's having himself a ball with that battle scene," I said to Blanche, when she had driven out with him one day. "Have you seen it? He never appears to tire, but he must be worn out!"

"Don't you worry about Alan," said Blanche. "I know him! It's the actors you ought to worry about!"

There was no general pattern to this fight scene, not after the first attack. He coached every one of the soldiers separately, so that the poses they struck, and their involved crosses, would give the audience a sense of ferocity. He thoroughly enjoys working with the Stratford actors; he likes their discipline and energy. Sometimes, they claimed, he enjoyed it too much.

"That's fine," he would say, when they had rushed through the scene at what they believed to be the swiftest clip attainable. "That's very nice, for a start. We'll get at it tomorrow and speed it up a bit. But that's a very nice beginning, for today."

Most of the soldiers stretched about the steps would shudder, while Max Helpmann would start talk of mutiny.

One odd detail of that scene clings to my mind. With the Romans driven back on one side of the stage, Robin Gammell, as a Roman officer, was to race up the right tunnel, take a flying leap onto the tumpy, and rally them by pointing toward the Volscians with his sword. Opposite him, Tony Robinow as a Volscian officer was to take a similar pose, sword tip to sword tip; and the scene was fought beyond these outstretched swords.

Attaining Tony's position was no problem, but on Robin's side was the tumpy. The tunnel ramp is an uphill run, and the leap onto the tumpy a thirty-inch step. This is exactly the sort of hazard to enthrall Alan, and to make him want to make the most of it.

He wanted the effect of this young, rallying spirit to be quick and visually clear. He raced down the tunnel to show Robin exactly how he wanted it done. Robin, not a dancer trained, tore up and tried it six to eight times, each time nearly right. A bit more to one side; weight swung forward this way; weight on the left foot; sword arm higher . . .

This form of action, if it is done right, seems to carry within it a co-ordination which the muscles themselves can recognize when it

is achieved. On about the eighth try, Robin let out a yell of triumph which would have rallied any army in the world. Chiming in with it was Alan's "Yes, that's right. That's it! You have it now. Keep it!"

To keep it, Robin made the run and the jump a half-dozen more times to get it set in his mind and his muscles, then wandered up to the green-room and stood restive by the window, drumming his fingers on the high beam which crosses it and looking as if he might take off.

"You surprised me," I said.

"Why?"

"The fact that you kept with it so long."

"Oh, that," Robin replied. "Why should it surprise you? Did you think I didn't do my homework? In a scene like that we have to get it right."

Then he looked out the window and remarked, "God, that sounded pompous!" and Jim Peddie said, "Yes, that's right, boy, so it did." Pompous or not—and it's a word that's hard to accord with Robin—it was fun to see all this energy in action. When the scientists get to writing their bits about the physical deterioration and lack of muscle tone of this generation, they'd do well to add a footnote excepting classical actors.

The battle scenes had begun to gather a positive clutch of experts. Peter Needham, onstage as a Roman officer, was also overseeing the interpolated duels. Alan Lund was choreographing the main battles. Then, they had to bring in John Hayes for incidental drill.

The drill situation was one of those trifling problems which rise to plague a director in the middle of a play. We may not know how to name a period, at Stratford, but authentic to that period we are! Michael suddenly discovered that neither he nor anyone else knew the form of rifle drill used in the early 1800's; and he is not the man to improvise upon a point like this.

John Hayes, Production Manager, had been up to his rebuilt ear in military matters in the last war. He had been a camp commandant, and General Crerar's aide, and a few other this's and that's between. Part of Stratford's resilient strength is its willingness to let a man do the thing he can do. So, somebody mentioned drill, and John Hayes said he thought he could do something about that, and proceeded to Toronto to lunch with a pal at the Military Institute. The Military

Institute has a library. The librarian was very helpful, and produced a book on 1812 drill, and also produced something more interesting: the information that it had last been used by those training the period soldiers at Toronto's Old Fort York.

So John thanked the man and tootled right down to Fort York, where a helpful commandant willingly turned out the guard. They went through a set of manoeuvres for John. He came back to Stratford all aglow, boned up a little further on his manual, and was set up in business as Parade Ground Sergeant-Major for two armies, Roman and Volscian, who, though in the same period, must yet have different drills.

He drilled them in the rehearsal hall, but suffered a dreadful fit of concern the first time, as to whether he should or should not use his full parade-ground voice. He didn't, as he thought he should start them gently.

"What is your full parade-ground voice?" I asked him innocently in the office. The ensuing bark knocked me three feet backwards, and almost jarred a typewriter off the desk. I'm not one for coddling our actors, but I think perhaps he had good reason for restraint.

In his primary role, as Production Manager, John also inherited the biggest battle problem of them all, the bayonets. This was after the real guns went into play. In the early acting of the scenes, sticks, pikes, anything of a roughly accurate size, had been used to indicate the muskets. As the scenes evolved, however, the actual muskets were brought on. They were real muskets, solid and impressive, and each one topped with a sixteen-inch bayonet of triangular steel.

"It just doesn't seem right to dispose of all the actors," said John at breakfast. "But with those bayonets onstage, we're going to."

The group around him agreed, sadly. They did not wish to abandon the policy of Stratford, and Stratford does not use fakes. The swords are real swords. The steel is real steel. It has always been this way. Always. Forever! All nine years.

John knew this as well as anybody. "But if these bayonets are real steel," he said, "we're going to decimate the Company. This seems a bit much."

It was quite true, and well the actors knew it. In attacking with fixed bayonet, and the bayonet pointed forward, they could control the tip; but in much of the fight, with over a dozen of them wheeling

and shoving at the tempo demanded by Alan, in limited space, those bayonets were too long and too sharp to be controlled at all.

They caused a philosophic problem as well, and through it we had a swift look at the iron core of conviction which underlies the differing arts.

"We could keep them steel, and have them authentic, if Alan would just change his battle scenes," said someone. "They don't have to be that vicious."

Alan would *not*!

"Well then, we could leave them steel, but make them shorter. The audience wouldn't notice."

No. But Tanya would! A sixteen-inch bayonet is a sixteen-inch bayonet, period, and in period! They could save actors' lives anyway they wished to save them. But not by chopping off her bayonets!

"If Michael wouldn't mind just a few less soldiers on the main stage . . ."

Michael did not choose to consider this. Michael blocks his own plays.

"I agree, though, they're dangerous. John, let Props fix something up."

This threw it right back to Production.

A dreary conclave was held in the green-room, of those who realized that the good old days were gone, forever gone.

"Could you make them of hard rubber, maybe?" asked someone. "My kid has a sword, it's rubber, and it . . ."

For one long and fascinating second, I thought John Hayes might faint.

"I can just see them," he said, one hand over his eyes to shut out even this inner vision, "bending, in the stage lights." He let his other wrist go limp, his hand drooping like a flower. "No, better murder than that. We'll have no rubber weapons on this stage."

"Plastic?" offered another, but it wasn't even thought of, it might shatter. Mark Negin was summoned to conference, and Mark, too busy to have time for philosophic reflection, trotted briskly off downstairs and turned out a couple in wood.

The policy-makers handled them sadly. They'd never cheated their audience before. Wood! And would it sound right? If bayonet crossed with bayonet, instead of the clear inspiring ring of steel on steel,

wouldn't there be a depressing clunk? No. It was generally agreed that no mere clunk would have a chance of reaching the front rows, not through the music with which Lou Applebaum was preparing to intimidate the audience. So Mark was requested to turn out a dozen more.

In the first fight with the wood bayonets, a thrilling episode, seven were snapped off short, and there were chips and splinters all over the stage. That settled that in a hurry! Everyone was rendered manic-depressive by visions of such a thing happening on opening night. Compared to such disaster, wounds or lives were nothing.

The final decision was such a delicious bit of pure Stratfordiana that I still grow delirious when I think of it. Steel was too dangerous, wood was too brittle; so, they made them of cast aluminum. Of course, beneath great pressure, they would snap off more easily than steel, but there was still a whole range of gouges, bruises, pricks and penetration, which they could achieve. This compromise was gratefully accepted. There were a few cuts and bruises, but in the end, the safety lay exactly where it always has: in the actors' skill and agility.

The worst thing I can think of to say about Lou Applebaum—and I've been thinking hard!—is that he doesn't know how to conduct, cause to be conducted, or allow to be conducted a recognizable version of "God Save the Queen". I have always felt that our splendid anthem is best rendered by an amateur pianist, unwillingly drafted into the effort at a Rotary banquet. In such case, he is apt to keep vividly in mind that the tune is the thing. I don't think Lou goes to Rotary. He always looks upon "God Save the Queen" as an inspiring challenge to original composition.

Somehow, since the Queen herself has honoured Stratford with her presence, it doesn't seem quite—quite—? For the sounds that wend their way down from the musicians' gallery are, to say the least, confusing to any routine royalist. Why, one year, that man (I think this is a secret that Stratford means to keep from its public, but truth will out!), that Lou, that Applebaum, actually rewrote "God Save the Queen" as a minuet! This was before *Much Ado About Nothing*, and he felt it suitable to the mood.

That particular rendition of the anthem had the tantalizing effect of gaining a round of applause every evening. This occurred through-

out the season, and it left everybody confused. Nobody at the theatre ever knew whether the startled audience was applauding the sheer daring, or whether they didn't recognize the anthem, and thought they were applauding a brief overture.

Composing for *Coriolanus* (the music of Stratford's plays is written for them), Lou Applebaum worked with Alan Lund on the battle scenes. The militaristic uproar he created always set my heart to thudding, even when I first heard it tinkled on the upright by Alf Stromberg's simplifying hand. By the time the other instruments were added, it was hard to listen to it without arising to a salute.

The composition of the music for the plays is not a simple matter of sitting home and writing down notes. The composers come to rehearsals and gain the mood of the scenes, and also their actual timing. Where the scene can't be changed, the music is. Lou is forever calling to Alf Stromberg, when he is playing, "Alf, take that last tiddle out," or "Put the tummy-tum back in." It sounds so carefree that it takes time to discover how beautifully attuned the music is to the play. As with some of the designing, it is often at its best when you don't notice it.

Like most of the other artists at Stratford, Lou Applebaum has a flock of outside credits to his name, unknown to many who work with him in the theatre. Tall, graceful, happy, with a harmony in his life as well as in his mind, Lou has the sizzling energy of one who is doing exactly what he wants to do in life, who has done lots of it, and who wishes that there were time to do more. He is a conductor and a composer; he has worked in Canada, England, and the U.S.A.; he came up through the communicative arts—radio, movies, TV—and is musical consultant for television at the CBC; but he is proudest of his work at Stratford. It is under Lou's benign generalship that the Music Festival there has grown to such proportions that it bolsters, and sometimes even competes with, the drama.

Always involved with three times as many projects as any normal man could handle (*i.e.*, twice as many as *he* can handle), Lou is hard to force to composition, and then works madly night and day to get it done on time. In this current spurt of madness, he claimed to have written for *Coriolanus* fourteen marches aside from the ones used. I was charmed to hear him admit it. It explains where he found the one he used to brace "God Save the Queen".

The dances in *Henry VIII* posed quite different problems for Alan, and for Lou. These were a courante and a saraband, great patterned dances, stately and strong, but meant to form their patterns on the tremendous open spaces of the floor of a great hall. Alan's business was to transfer the effect of these dances to a stage on which no more than four couples could be on an open floor at one time. The others would be on steps, or among pillars, and the second they moved in the dancing, all of them would have steps to go up or down.

These steps caused incidental problems. A lady with a slight train on her gown cannot step backwards in dancing, but she can make a small circle and swing it out of the way. Since the dances and the trains existed in the same era, the dances were designed for them, and on a flat floor there is no problem. But try to get a court lady with a slight train to make a small circle on three steps, and you're going to have an interesting effect indeed. So all of the patterns had to be widened on the steps, and the overall effect changed to allow swinging up and down the steps by the couples who danced. When well done, this added an extraordinary grace and lightness to the dance, but in the planning stage it gave difficulties. No two couples could perform precisely the same motions, yet the effect must be of one formalized dance.

There was also the question of arm motions, almost as important in these costumes as the placement of the feet. The ladies of Tudor times wore long sleeves, sweeping the floor, and part of the grace of their dances is to raise the arms to show the full line of their flowing sleeves. It also serves to keep the sleeves off the floor, so that their partners need not trip on them and go sprawling—never the best effect in any dance.

The dance is a part of the scene, and a major dramatic point of the play turns upon it, so Alan was also limited by the positions onstage of the leading characters. George McCowan decided where they must be for dramatic purpose, then Alan worked this into the dance, to see that they arrived there, as if naturally. This is the dance at which Henry meets Anne Bullen, so he must meet her at just the right second, in the right place, for the audience to notice what has happened. The crowd must clear, as though by chance, so that Cardinal Wolsey will see.

Alan not only beat these problems, but enjoyed them. So did the Company. Courante and saraband may sound stiff, but they are actually brisk, vigorous dances, fun to do. Those of the audience who remarked that the dancers seemed to enjoy the dances in *Henry*, weren't in this case being fooled by technique or by acting. They were absolutely right.

Lou's business was to write the music for these dances and for the songs; and in a paroxysm of pleasure with the lyric "When that Orpheus with his lute", he wrote such an involved accompaniment to it that there wasn't a hope that any of the girls in the company could sing it adequately. There are no excuses allowed at Stratford; any actor there sings, fights, dances, does any other job required of him; but this was vocally beyond any but a superbly trained voice. The Company were already complete and contracted, but Lou suffered one of those fits of artistic obstinacy which often assail us out there (and lucky it is for the audience that they do!) and refused to diminish his composition to the range of the voices available.

At this time, the Stratford papers were full of the vocal triumphs of a local girl, Barbara Collier; and with this to jog their memories, the powers that be recalled that Barbara, a college girl (an anthropology major, no less!), was working for the summer months in our Box Office.

So, Barbara strolled in to work as usual one morning at nine, at nine-twenty was asked if she would sing for John Cook (no reasons given), and at ten-ten suddenly discovered that she was now the fifty-second member of Stratford's acting Company. She became a lady in waiting to Queen Katharine in *Henry*, and a peasant girl in *Love's Labour's Lost*. In the latter, with Murray Scott, she led the spring and winter songs which concluded the production.

Flap in Wardrobe—extra costume for *Henry*, extra costume for *L.L.L.*, and shoes! Rush in Props—extra set of jewellery. Rush in the office—pictures for the press. Flap in Publicity—change in the programs, just going to print. Special rehearsal—change in the blocking.

Through this moved Barbara, dark-haired, dark-eyed, pretty, silent with excitement. She is a lovely girl, the nicest kind of girl to have something happy happen to; and for all that day, and for days thereafter, we felt as if we were part of a story about theatre, a tale written about it from outside.

15....

“THIS,” announced Douglas Campbell, “is the picture which will put an end to all that nonsense about burlesque!”

He stood, planted firmly, sturdy, striking, the very picture of a Holbein-Tudor-Jackson prince. From his isolation, he carefully ignored the appreciative chuckles which his entrance, and entrance line, had as carefully produced. He was such a picture of Henry VIII, Henry in buff and gold and brown and tawny yellows, that all he needed was a frame around him; though, had there been a frame, he would have been out of it quickly. Standing still, this Dougie finds a chore.

The first photocall in costume serves as unveiling to the rest of the theatre of the designers' major works, and also marks the turning-point of the pre-season. This is the point at which insecurity enters in!

It occurs three weeks before opening, and better than a week before dress rehearsal. At it, only the stars are photographed, and in one costume each. It is by no means a full dress run-through. These are simply photographs set up and taken far in advance, for our own program, and also to supply the periodicals away from our immediate range, or those which have a longer printing time than daily papers, with photographs which they can print in time for opening night.

Since there is no time to spare for such publicity frivolities as photocalls during the 9 A.M. to 10 P.M. working day, these are run during spare time. *Henry VIII* was called for 11 P.M. Saturday until 2 A.M. Sunday. *Coriolanus* and *Love's Labour's Lost* were both Sunday calls.

Aside from those of the Company who are not in the photos but who linger around simply to get a first look at the costumes, these photo breaks call out a clutch of experts in a variety of lines, and

the eager anxiety for perfection—perfection for which there is no standard, because it is artistic and original—is never more obvious than at these times.

Henry VIII was called for Saturday night at eleven, and at it was the following force:

Pete Smith and two assistants to take the photos.

Jack Karr and two of his department to line them up.

George McCowan, Director of the play.

Michael Langham, Artistic Director of the Festival.

Brian Jackson, Designer of the play.

Tanya Moiseiwitsch, to admire Brian's work.

Dinah Greet, Wardrobe co-ordinator.

Ivan Alderman and two or three of Wardrobe's cutters.

Sophie Martin, to watch over the headgear.

Laurie Freeman as Wiggy.

Mark Negin for Props.

Fred Nihda, Jeweller, to check on his creations.

John Hayes, Production Manager.

Bruce Swerdfager, Company Manager.

Vic Polley, Business Administrator.

Tom Bohdanetzky, Stage Manager for the play.

Len Smith, Electrician.

Jack Hutt, keeping an eye on all.

This group, all knowledgeable in their own lines, swirled about, eight or nine rows back, getting views of costumes from different angles. Among them Brian Jackson prowled, delighted with his own works and equally delighted with criticisms which could improve them.

The lights were set up on stage, for, by tradition, these photos are always taken on the stage. This causes dreadful lighting difficulties, as the background always comes out black. One of Pete Smith's advantages, as photographer-in-waiting to the Festival, is his ability to make the most of light upon the stage.

We were all clustered about chattering idly when someone let out an approving shout of "Oh, *Brian!*" Brian, eyes shining, smiled shyly and said, "Yes, it is—sort of—isn't it?"

Henry VIII had come striding onstage, and stood astride with hand on hip, glaring around at us—every inch a king, and every

inch the right king—while we gave a flutter of applause, that half ironic, gay applause which actors exchange between themselves. Dougie delivered the line which I lifted for the opener to this chapter, and we deepened the applause. The laughter was for Dougie, the applause for Brian, which left all things just as they ought to be.

Ivan was gazing at the rust and buff and gold, the befurred and jewelled intricacy of the costume, with proprietary pride. After the initial effect of the full picture, everyone else was gazing at his own contribution. There was a delay with the cameras, and Henry came swinging up the side aisle to talk with a group of actors lounging there. One apparently mentioned the costume, for his deep laugh vibrated through the theatre, and he said, "Oh, yes, they makes good clothes in this 'ere 'ouse, they do!"

Those who made the good clothes were already in a fever of wanting to make them better. Fred Nihda went loping along a row of seats, and said to Dougie, "That pendant, it's too much of an extra. It just looks like a blob. Fine for a picture, but for performance I think you'd better cut it. Check with Brian." Dougie clutched the pendant and said, "Right off? Right, we'll see." Yet Fred was cutting out one of the major works of his own hand, a creation individually beautiful, which he felt did not enhance the play.

Dinah Greet, notebook in hand, was making brief comment and swift notes. The costume must be broken down further; it looked too shiny and new. Heads drew together to discuss the way the costume moved, whether a heavy chain swung too lightly, whether a jewel glittered too brightly or not enough. Laurie Freeman darted up to look closely at the beard and touched it with two fingers while Dougie stood in bristling Tudor fashion, chin up, but patient to the adjusting touch.

Claude Bede, John Colicos, Joseph Rutten, Paul Scofield: "Tread not upon him."

Douglas Chamberlain and Robin Gammell in Henry VIII with Props' dead fish, made of satin and paint combined to "give off the lambent glitter of scales".





The exhibition Dougie was giving was one of the pleasures of working around the theatre, one of the special dividends offered to those who are there. No outsider could have seen it, for the presence of one outsider would have toned it down. Be it noted that this cheery good humour, raised to the blatant, followed a fourteen-hour working day. This resilience is engrained in the mind and in the discipline, and is part of Dougie's power—a power which he later could add to the role he played.

Stills of Henry, solo, were to be followed by King Henry with Queen Katharine. Brian darted backstage, then rushed out to catch the entrance; and suddenly Kate Reid swept in on the side stage stair.

Henry bowed low before her, and Kate swept lower yet in a curtsy to her lord and master, while the group in the theatre very nearly swooned. She wore the blue velvet costume with great ermine sleeves which swept the floor, and the jewelled panel on the skirt, created by Brian. The jewelled chain around the waist, and the crucifix that hung from it, were the work of Fred Nihda's hand. It was totally gorgeous, and brought a united gasp of pleasure at seeing the ultimate in sumptuousness.

This state of ecstasy lasted exactly thirty seconds. Kate swept down the stairs laughing, turned to speak to Dougie, the two of them swapped congratulatory chitchat underneath the lights, and half of Wardrobe went tearing up on the stage to kneel around Kate.

Above, John and Mona Colicos backstage after the violent and triumphant curtain calls for the first night of Love's Labour's Lost.

Jack Creley, the Duke of Buckingham in Henry VIII and Holofernes in Love's Labour's Lost, and here as Nicanor in Coriolanus.

Below, Douglas Rain in his scarlet robe for Henry VIII: "Nobody ever thought of worrying over Wolsey."

Pat Galloway as Valeria, bringing to Coriolanus "the grace of her own striking beauty".

It wasn't devotion; the ermine was moulting all over her blue velvet skirt. You don't know what anguish is till you've seen Wardrobe at Stratford faced with the chance that a bit of fluff might show where the designs had not distinctly indicated bits of fluff.

People rushed backstage. Brushes appeared. Agonized consultations were held on the stage steps. Kate, trapped in heavy costume under heating lights, moved back and forth to give them a chance to see the dress in action, and waved for her dresser to rush back to get fresh powder before the lens came close.

She and Dougie, old friends and colleagues, were indulging in a pretense of jealousy. Dougie had more glitter, but Kate conceived a stratagem—later dignified by a participle of its own, "sleeving"—in which, as they stood together, she would casually fling her yards of ermine forward to take the centre of the picture. He would counter with muttered threats about beheadings and the Tower, only to find himself enmeshed, as if by chance, in another sleeve. This was strictly byplay between them—though certainly not private—to while away the time until the cameras could be set. It had a purpose, for it is not easy to wait in costume for half an hour at midnight, and still look alive while standing to be photographed.

Queen Kate was maintaining her good humour under physical pain. The boxlike Tudor headdress, which had slipped on and off easily enough during fittings, now proved to be considerably too snug in the heavy band which crosses the forehead. So deeply did this cut on the right side that a red welt beneath it widened and showed even below the headdress, and Kate was in agony. This is not to say that she dramatized it. That game is for offstage actors; Kate can make a fuss about a stubbed toe, elsewhere, but she is a professional, and here there was no fuss. But there was that red welt, growing, and pain in her eyes, and a frenzy among those of Wardrobe who felt individually responsible for this.

The tightness of the band, plus Kate's thick hair, made it impractical to remove the headdress while waiting between pictures; but Brian Jackson discovered by experiment that heavy pressure on the sides of the rooflike structure would lift the pressure of the band from her brow. Through quite a few of the waiting moments (she was there over an hour), Brian stood, his powerful hands pressing the headdress in to just the right position, while Kate, unable to

move her head, but thankfully relieved of the immediate pain, joked with the others to keep up her spirits, so that the photos would not show too much distress.

Kate's conduct in face of pain, when onstage, is one of the nicest things about a gal who likes to make a fine hoop-de-doo about nothing, when she's off. The most brilliant example of it had come the previous season, when, as the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, she went on with a broken arm. The fracture—both bones in the forearm—occurred less than an hour before curtain time. By the time a doctor had been found, and called to the theatre, it was far too late to put her understudy on. Despite the doctor's admonitions against it, Kate had him tie her arm up in an impromptu splint, and went on with the whole arm balanced on her hand plunged deep in her apron pocket. In Act II, where she wears no apron, she simply had Wardrobe tie the broken arm by a cord, tight to her waist. Anyone who has faced the shock and pain which follows a fracture, and the additional pain which comes with sudden activity, will be able to judge of the feat of going on to play a boisterous role for three hours.

As it happened, there was a chance to judge of how successfully she had disguised her injury. The show was one of the high-school matinées which the Festival runs in September, and it is the practice to have one of the actors come out afterwards and answer questions about the theatre and the show. Bruno Gerussi had the job on this occasion.

The kids shouted their usual questions. Bruno and Julie Harris had played a flamboyantly successful teen-aged Romeo and Juliet, and one question was: "How old did you consider Romeo in this?" Bruno, who was thirty-two, laughed. "Well—well, let's face it. As young as I could get away with. How old do you figure I played it?" "Seventeen, eighteen," shouted back his seventeen- and eighteen-year-old audience. Not bad, for any actor!

Then they asked about the Nurse. "What was the symbolism of having the Nurse's hand tied to her costume?"

"Symbolism?" Bruno spun on his heel toward the new question, as he did so lighting up with a rare delight.

"Yes, what did it mean in the story?"

"That was no symbolism," Bruno answered, covering his own pleasure by stooping to pick up a loose blossom and a spray of

flowers, where the death scene he'd played minutes before had left them lying on the stage. "Kate Reid, the actress who plays the part, broke her arm just before the curtain." A gasp came from the audience as he went on in brief, understated explanation. The young crowd listened, breathless, and burst into loud applause.

As they did, Bruno tossed up the blossom, took a long, expressive swing at it with the spray as a baseball bat, struck it, and watched it float aside. Under the ripple of laughter at an action so characteristic that it was totally Bruno, he added, quietly, clearly, "She's quite a gal, our Kate!"

The audience smiled, happy. They were young, and young ears are expert in their hearing. They knew they had heard real admiration, truly spoken. They may not have known that they had also heard professional pride in a job well done by another professional. If Kate had cheated, they would have asked, "What was wrong with the actress?" But what they had wanted to know was, "What did it mean, in the Nurse?"

Kate did not hear Bruno's comment. She was being rushed to the hospital to have that arm X-rayed and set, four hours late.

The matter of a headband cutting into a forehead is scarcely in the same class, but the failure to dramatize this at the wrong time—that is in the same class, for it is the class of Kate.

Queen Katharine's new art of sleeving received a full work-out when Anne Bullen was brought onto the scene. Pat Galloway, one of the loveliest women ever to take Stratford's stage, came on with the grace of her own striking beauty but less luxuriantly dressed, for Anne never appears in *Henry VIII* as queen.

The problem of how to pose any picture of King Henry VIII, with both Queen Katharine and Anne Bullen in it, would strain the liveliest imagination, and George McCowan cheerfully passed the buck.

"Well, you know," he said to his three actors, "just get together, somehow. But stay in your own proper characters." Then he retired to the rim of darkness, half-way up the centre aisle. At this moment, it was an excellent place to be.

In their own proper characters, Queen Katharine and Anne Bullen, together, would have clawed each other's eyes out; but they settled it, one by looking regal and one by looking pert, with Henry striving very hard to look completely non-committal in between. While

setting it up, however, Katharine amused herself by muffling Anne in ermine, apparently negligently, while Anne retaliated by ogling Henry behind her back.

The other major to be photographed at this first call for *Henry* was Douglas Rain; and he, in yards and yards and yards of scarlet silk as Wolsey, snug beneath his cardinal's beretta, chose to exhibit a sublime benevolence.

The evening leaves me with one fragmentary vision, of Queen Katharine in all her pictorial glory, having flinched back at the pain of her headdress, receiving spiritual comfort and benediction from an attending Cardinal. She gazed upon him with a look entirely queenly, and "Damn Your Eminence" she sweetly said.

At 4 A.M., Wardrobe were still in committee. Wolsey's crucifix had swung too lightly. Weight it. Cut Henry's extra medallion. Re-do Queen Katharine's headdress for size; also, cut the headband higher. The audience need to see more of her face from the side. Check on the length of Wolsey's gown—can he stride freely? His scarlet gloves need to be broken down. Break down Henry's coat also; a darker shadow run along the seams. Should there be another ring for Anne Bullen?

Into the night it went on, into the morning, as it would go on until opening. Additions, subtractions, changes, the buffing up of detail. Costumes must be right even in motion, not pictures on a board, but costumes in a play.

The *Coriolanus* photocall, set for Sunday morning, was another thing again; decidedly another.

All of those involved with *Henry* had been Stratford veterans. They knew its ways, they knew one another, George McCowan was present, Pete Smith is accustomed to photographing all of them, they were able to indulge in a certain amount of diversion and still get on with the job.

One episode which had almost marred the early evening, however—and by "early", of course, I mean midnight—was that Michael Langham quietly arose and left. He paused part way up the stairs to speak to someone and, as he turned, stumbled on the stair. Michael is not a man who stumbles. Then he turned and went down instead of up, and off backstage; and something in his manner of going

jolted me so much that I went backstage.

Tanya, who was drifting back and forth to see the *Henry* costumes, and in between creating rosettes for slippers for *L.L.L.* with her own hands, happened to be in her office.

"Did you see Michael?" I asked her in the casual tone we all adopted on this subject.

"Yes," she said. "Why?"

"There was something about the way he left the photobreak that disturbed me. Everything all right?" I asked.

"Well, you're a ray of sunshine," said Tanya crossly. "He just came in here and sat down and told me three new props he needed for *Coriolanus*."

"But he did sit down," I pointed out. Customarily, Michael stands.

"A little tired, maybe," suggested Tanya. "He would have reason to be. I hope he'll get rest tomorrow."

"With two photocalls?" I asked.

"I hope so. What shape do you think a helmet box would be? I'd think round; but he wants to use it as a table for a lamp."

Whether his exit was illness, weariness, or mere good sense, Michael did not turn up the following morning. Since this was Paul Scofield's first introduction to camera work in Canada, I am morally certain his absence had not been planned.

A professional actor, however gifted, has, and has to have, a tremendous self-surrender to the needs of his profession. Contrary to general opinion, actors do not enjoy having their pictures taken. Far, far from it. This kind of classical actor would much prefer to express himself solely on a stage. Since pictures are a necessity, however, they will give themselves to them. It is not an onerous task; but to Paul Scofield, totally unaware of how the calls here were to be run or directed, to face his first one without a director was not a simple act.

There were backstage complications, to begin with. The firm which had made the basic uniforms, to be finished at Stratford, had managed to make his four inches too large at the waist. This could be remedied, but not in time for photocall. In a wardrobe department such as Stratford's this was enough to cause outright anguish, and did. Since these are cutaway sashed tunics, every quick arm movement would pull the front of the jacket free of the sash. There

was much pinning and fixing, and much muttering in the aisle seats that never, never would they trust anyone from outside again.

The lights were set up, the call given. Coriolanus came onstage—not with that flourish of making an entrance for the fun of his friends which had set off the pyrotechnics of the night before, but striding on quietly, a business man to his business; but a little stronger, a little more stunning, a little more clear-cut than any but a handful of business men ever are.

He strode on and stood still, waiting, and most of us stared at him as if we'd never seen Paul Scofield before. That man's extraordinary face can set itself, not rigidly, yet through a full performance, in any mould he cares to give to it. This was Coriolanus, young, handsome, patrician. He wore scarcely any make-up, yet the face was not Paul Scofield's day-to-day face at all.

One characteristic, however, short of a full performance, he cannot disguise or control. The eager, interested eyes, outward indication of the mind leashed behind them, do not change or yet grow still. Now he stood easily, attentive, with no gestures save a casual trying of his left hand for the easiest position on his sword, but the eyes were focussing on everything—he looked at the camera, the hands of the assistants fixing lights gained his brief but full attention, his glance did a swift circuit of the theatre, registering quickly everyone who was there.

Pete Smith, who chatters with himself and with his cameras while setting lenses, enlarged his conversational sounds to include those nearby. He indicated he was ready. He turned to Paul Scofield.

A brief look of bewilderment swept over Paul's face.

"But what do you want me to do?" he asked. "I mean, aside from sit or stand?"

"Well, I don't know," said Pete. "Let's try one sitting."

"But, beyond that?" It was urgent. Nobody seemed to sense that he was seeking information, that he actually wanted to know what kind of pictures they wished to take.

Pete said nothing. Jack Karr waited amiably, nearby. Paul looked out front for rescue. The whole crew was present, but everyone just smiled back at him. He needed someone to tell him what this photocall was supposed to illustrate. Certain scenes? A character? The costume? What?

It was an absolutely fascinating moment when he discovered he was going to receive no aid. He visibly collected his wits, visibly registered that he would have to make the decisions, without a knowledge of the policy which they should implement. And, knowing it, he did it. As he sat in the consul's chair, which had been pushed up for him, one could see him arranging the picture as best he could. The sword swung aside, one knee bent, the other booted foot thrust forward. For a moment he had trouble with a hand. He placed it in two or three positions on his knee, watching it as if it were a separate item, then suddenly nodded and smiled as conviction struck him, and closed that hand into a loose fist upon his knee.

In the same instant, the whole face hardened. He went completely still and rigid as a rock. It was Coriolanus in one of his granite moods, and for a brief bit of still characterization it was the swiftest creation I've ever seen.

They took a couple of pictures. Dinah and Tanya raced up to tug the wrinkles around to the other side. His eyes glanced up to see what they were doing, but he remained in position, immobile, allowing them to fuss around him; remained in character—Coriolanus, unyielding, as rigid and cool as steel.

The man is famous for the gentleness of his co-operation, but it isn't softness. On this day, indeed, it gained some of the extra temper of steel. At one point, Pete, who knows a good picture when he sees it, but who didn't know *Coriolanus*, suggested that the left hand should be relaxed more gracefully upon the knee. Paul let it go limp one second to try it, smiled fleetingly at Pete, and closed it to a fist again.

The other stills of him standing and with his cloak were arranged in much the same fashion. He found the pose; he gave it the characteristic additions. Pete might say, "By the post, maybe?" but it was Paul who arranged the hand upon the post and who brought Coriolanus into the picture which would have been Paul Scofield otherwise.

The really bright pictures of him came when he was being taken with the other actors. There's a love of a one of him with John Colicos, both of them wearing strained, bright expressions worthy of the Mona Lisa. If anyone wonders what the scene meant, it meant that the two of them were fighting down fits of laughter every time

they stared straight into one another's eyes. Looking directly into someone's eyes for long is difficult, even for an actor. Try it! Their struggles added the necessary lightness to the mood.

By the time that Bruno Gerussi, trim, dapper and greyed, as one of the tribunes, got in on the act, it quickened from the gay to the outright uproarious. They took a picture of him gripping Coriolanus' arm in some sort of plebeian frenzy. It is no part of the play, of course, but—Michael wasn't there. In the picture, Paul was to glance up at Bruno with a look of withering contempt. Paul could stay rocklike before the fusses and fidgets, but the second he looked up at Bruno, he completely broke up. The melting of contempt on rugged features into helpless laughter is, in its way, endearing, but it didn't endear itself to Pete Smith or his lens.

"Yes, yes, we must get down to this," Bruno would say, he being the one who received the directest reproof from Pete. "Work! Concentrate. I am vicious, you are contemptuous. Remember!"

"Certainly," Paul would say. "Contemptuous. Yes. Surely we can manage that." Each would get into position, with appropriate expression.

"Now!" Pete Smith would say.

Paul would look up at his tribune one second, and gales of laughter would blow the picture away the next. They finally caught it by using Pete's fastest lens and catching the picture one split second before Paul caught Bruno's eye.

When those pictures later went up on the boards, a newsman gravely pointed out to me that that one was remarkable. Both faces, he thought, reflected such "concealed strength".

This merriment of Paul's turned to gentleness, and Bruno stilled his gaiety, when it came to photographing Eleanor Stuart. She, commanding in the rich purples and black of her Volumnia costume, still went stiff from politeness, from a will to co-operate, before the cameras. Paul, John and Bruno all worked to give those pictures of hers life and likeness; even to reach to some of the warmth which is Eleanor herself. The best ones of her were taken with one of them, or, if alone, with one of them chatting with her from beside the camera.

Michael came in for the *Love's Labour's Lost* photos, which whizzed through on schedule, and to no one's surprise turned out to

be the brightest and the aptest of the lot. Heroine of the occasion proved to be Joy Parker, a lovely girl offstage, who suddenly proved that she was going to be a reigning beauty onstage.

Michael Langham was driving his two plays through in a final rush. There was no longer a question of whether he would get through; he was working with a decision and an energy that his own actors had never seen in him before. Now the only question was whether his plays, late in starting, could make it, could hit their height, in time to open. In this race Michael spared nobody, least of all himself.

There are two men in that theatre whose vocabularies I envy with a passionate professional jealousy. Both have a command of words which comes only from swift intelligence, fine senses, and experience in living. The first, by a long shot, is Bruno Gerussi. (I must write a book about Bruno some time.) The other is Michael Langham. Michael's control of his ideas and wishes, while directing, has its outward expression in directives which are most exceeding clear:

—You can enter on a sort of a limited prance.

—All right, then. Don't sit. But find some state of decomposition to fall into.

—Not enough quality to the booing. The boos need to come searing through. Let them burn. Someone needs to conduct the change to laughter; it needs a cheer leader. Get the orchestration of this booing. It's a noise which turns the plot.

—The line here is contempt for the idea, not thought about it. Thought gives it a dignity you don't want it to have.

—More, Eric, more! An agony of amusement!

—This scene starts not after the line, but in the line. The cue in Shakespeare is invariably given before the end of the line, the cue for the next feeling or attitude.

—Use a sort of romantic lean.

—Not a mental thing, a physical thing, a yearning with the arms.

—The gruntings and belchings, time them to come at the end of phrases. There is rhythm to this scene.

—The point is, to make this exotic savagery toward the women wildly exciting. Snarl!

—Yes, I know you're a soldier. But presumably you have *some*

reaction to being about to be killed?

—These last scenes are cold. It is winter. Let us *see* cold. But don't let your teeth chatter through the lines.

—Get up those stairs faster. —I can't, Michael. I'm supposed to be an old man. —All right, peel off five years.

The sense of security and serenity of the actors onstage in rehearsal might not be very great before Michael, but the sense of security which he could give them before an audience was tremendous. There was bound to be friction, but there was surprisingly little, and those general orders flung at the group together seldom cut very deeply into anyone.

16....

“I love this moment in the theatre,” I said to Jack Creley and Paul as the two of them stood by the coffee bar, both in costume for *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. All around us, actors in costume filled the green-room, talking with a new vivacity.

“What moment?” asked Jack cautiously.

“This moment. Dress run-through. When you take over the theatre. Up to now, the theatre has been ours; from now on, it’s yours. It’s slipped into the proper hands, and this is the day it does.”

“I know what you mean,” said Jack softly, and set a hand on my wrist in brief accent of the knowledge, to underline the fact that he was pleased I knew it, too.

“Perhaps we would like to give it back to you,” suggested Paul, and cast me a side glance meant to be amusement; but the tone spoke all the unconscious proud possession in the world.

Dress run-through is not a dress rehearsal. It is simply a staged opportunity for director and designer to see the effects which they have created for the stage, to view costumes and props in relation to one another, and to see them in time for changes to be made. It used to be a simple parade of costumes, but, because of the vigorous action of the plays, it was decided the costumes should be seen in action, in rehearsal; so the dress run-throughs were born.

The actors are in costume, and all props which are finished are present. The actors wear wigs, but do not wear make-up at this time, and in these run-throughs they seldom overexert themselves in playing their parts. They cannot, for all sorts of peculiar things happen with the costumes, and there are incessant interruptions while costumes are checked.

But the main difference to the theatre is still that this is the time it begins to belong to the actors. The dressing-rooms at last are theirs, and the backstage area begins to centre the theatre. The costumes,

which have hung on racks in Wardrobe, move into the dressing-rooms. Props are stored in the immediate backstage area, pikes and banners and muskets racked up by the entrances, furniture placed conveniently at hand, individual hand props for each play on tables just behind the entrances.

Jack Hutt's staff enlarges. Stagehands arrive to learn their duties. Dressers stroll down the corridors, taking wigs on wig-blocks to the dressing-rooms. Each play begins to assume an identity; they are realities now, each belonging to its actors, no longer just a vision in a director's mind.

The dress run-throughs are held at night, from 6:30 to whenever they are finished. The routine of the season is established from this time, and hereafter each actor checks in with the stage doorman thirty-five minutes before the rehearsal or play begins.

At the run-throughs, the designer of the play which is being run, and Dinah Greet, Wardrobe Administrator, are busy an hour beforehand checking details of costume backstage. It is quite possible, with exotic costumes, to have the actors and dressers themselves uncertain of the order in which the pieces of apparel must go on, and Dinah is involved in coaching and checking, as well as in sorting, until the lights go up.

Out front, during the run-through, will be director and designer, John Hayes for Production, Dinah Greet for Wardrobe, and the usual assortment from Props, office, everywhere, to keep an eye on the scene. Jack Karr, Publicity, and Pete Smith, photographer, also sit in, watching for angles they can catch on the final photocall, and a cluster of artists and technicians consider critically the works of their own hands.

The play always runs slowly; but with luck, there unfolds—sometimes to the surprise of the actors—the vision which the director originally held. If, for example, he has stilled a group at one corner of the stage for no good reason they could see, the reason may become manifest when they discover the effect of that group of costumes there.

Some actors have more vivid imaginations than others concerning the effect of costume on their roles. Some have to mute their style when suddenly costumed, but others have had it in mind's eye since the beginning, and these suddenly produce an effect quite unex-

pected by all except themselves.

The *Henry VIII* costumes caused such a flutter among the actors wearing them, as well as among the ones who viewed, that the *Henry* run-through took till after midnight. There were few errors to be corrected in the costumes, but so bulky were the men's short coats, so sweeping the ladies' dresses and sleeves, that all sorts of collisions were occurring onstage, and some of the scenes had to be regrouped. It is all right for the actors to have problems with costumes, but not allowed that the audience should notice the fact.

The run-through of the dance was sensationally animated, as passages which had been deftly performed in rehearsal clothes now resulted in sleeve collisions, and thereby lost their *élan*. The girls, although they had rehearsed in rehearsal skirts (long, full, factory-cotton skirts used to accustom the wearer to the pull of the material, and very fetching when pinned on over slacks), were yet unprepared for the weight of these materials, and for the bulky sleeves.

It was not a farrago, of course; Stratford's Company would consider themselves inept if they couldn't adjust to an emergency like this; but the dance did grow pretty merry, mirth which George did nothing to quell.

When the final scene—the christening—swept onstage, all in yellow and white, with gold-and-white copes for the bishops, gold-and-white banners centred by a gold-and-white Tudor rose, gold-and-silver standards for the arms of Tudor and Bullen, the Court ladies all in yellow, and the King himself in white and gold—when this golden glow burst onstage it drew a gasp from all beholders. Brian was prowling around the theatre, one-third ecstatic and two-thirds critical of flaws which only his eye could see.

Henry was the obvious raised beyond imagination; but in neither *Love's Labour's Lost* nor *Coriolanus* was there anything of the obvious to come. In both of these plays, less firmly tied to history, Tanya's designs, brought onstage, suddenly gave new meaning to the tale.

In *Love's Labour's*, the romantic cavalier styles, wide collars, lovelocks to the shoulder, suddenly made sense of the meanderings of the young men. Also, something happened to the actors.

Leo Ciceri always acts toward costume, and so, it turned out, does Joy Parker. The play, which had belonged to this point to Berowne

and Rosaline, was suddenly borrowed from them by the Princess and the King. All their work on technique, all the intellect behind it, this night paid its dividend, as Joy and Leo, utterly free in costume, utterly beautiful in themselves, suddenly swept onstage and took over the show.

Joy was a revelation. We had seen Leo do this before, but she had rehearsed so quietly, spoken so sweetly, and scared us so thoroughly as to whether the back rows would ever hear her, that this sudden blossoming of the actress into her role, clear, gay, audacious, and audible, was dazzling, and Joy became the star of the night.

I looked for her backstage at intermission, found her busy, so carried my surprise to Paul.

"Why, Joy just suddenly has it," I babbled. "She's marvellous. Just yesterday it was only rehearsal, and today she has it in full."

"Oh, thank you so much," said Paul, unsurprised but appreciative. "I'll tell her. Joy always does that. Just when one wonders—there comes a minute, and she has it, fully. The minute always comes." Then, lest he had been boasting too much of one of whom he is radiantly proud, he added, "Of course, Tanya's frocks must have helped."

"That's nice," I said, "but it won't do. It's a whole lot more than the frocks. It's the sheer surprise that's the fun. It's exciting! She's lovely!"

He smiled as one who knew. "How nice that she surprised you. She will enjoy that." Then, thoughtfully, contemplatively, as if observing an outside phenomenon, he added, "They say sometimes I do that, too."

Yes.

At this point he couldn't have surprised us if he'd taken off like a rocket. We might be surprised at *what* he did, but *that* he did it, no.

The frocks in question were causing trouble for one person, though. Zoe Caldwell and the period found themselves at odds. No amount of silk can shroud Zoe's oomph, but suddenly it wasn't geared to the play.

She recognized this more swiftly than anyone else, and I suspect she knew it best when she saw Joy Parker sweep past her. You cannot slink in cavalier silks, and there are various undulations effective in slacks and sweater which go totally awry in a huge skirt, tight bodice,

and wide lace collar.

More freedom is allowed at run-throughs than at other rehearsals, and the watching Company and staff were letting their reactions come through loud and clear. They gasped when they felt like it, whistled when they felt like it, and laughed when, where, and as they wished. Zoe definitely has It, and her forays were gaining the attention which they always warrant; but she has a better ear than most, and it took her no time at all to realize that the appreciative chuckles which followed her were for Zoe Caldwell, those which greeted the others were for the actors and the play.

I never saw so swift a discovery, nor so decisive an action upon one. All through Act I, she and the period were only remotely related; and whenever a break in the action allowed it, her eyes were flashing about in a recognition amounting to ferocity. By Act II she had the idea, and to her credit be it, she made no further effort to hold the attention with her own approved extravagances, but used her professional powers to adapt herself to—and to recapture—the play. It was quite an exhibition of skill and intention, and by the end of the run-through she almost had it; but not at all in the way that Joy suddenly had her part.

This ferocity throughout Act I brought on one of Zoe's rare errors in her lines. At one point, Douglas Rain is reading a letter which Don Armado has written, much of which concerns a king and a beggar maid. This reading is a fair example of Michael's style, for the letter is long, and full of obvious questions and answers. Without changing the text in the least, he yet had Boyet pause on those questions, and the girls interrupt to shout the answers at him. A long, pedantic letter thus becomes a game between them, without losing one syllable or nuance of its style.

Boyet was standing among the girls, reading the letter, and reached the question, "To whom came he?" to which, in answer to a flutter of the feathers on his hat, Zoe is to answer, "To the beggar."

In the excitement of the moment, Zoe was observing much beside and beyond Doug Rain, and was running her role through part of her mind while the rest thought other thoughts.

"To whom came he?" asked Boyet, and flourished his hat toward Rosaline for answer.

"To the devil!" at full stage volume.

Doug Rain cast her an amused look.

"To the devil?" repeated Zoe, astonished at her own voice. "The devil. The *devil*? How did he get in?"

Some of us had our own ideas, and a laugh was breaking, but—

"Take it from 'To whom came he?'" said Michael, and the sputtering girl onstage became the actress, and the beggar was brought back into the act.

The entrance of Marcade, the messenger of death, in Act II of *Love's Labour's*, was so effective in the run-through that it even threw the onstage actors off. Never again in the season did they achieve such complete astonishment at his appearance as they did this first time that Garrick Hagon in black velvet, black cloak, black gloves, black hat, black plume, pale face, black hair and beard, strode softly on and appeared among them.

"I wish he could have come in a boat," said Tanya. He didn't need a boat.

Of course, most of us could see that Tanya had gone awry with Don Armado. To begin with, we had grown accustomed to seeing Don Armado in rehearsal clothes, and Paul in shirt, slacks, and jacket could make him so effective that we were distressed to see him muffled up.

He came on bare-faced and bare-headed in the run-through, with neither wig nor beard. His clothes, out of date in a period slightly earlier than the others, were in rusty greens so broken that, never ragged, they yet showed their age and wear. Yet they were jaunty; the shoes were square-toed and worn, but there were bows upon them. His cape, two feet too long and worn loosely from the shoulders, dragged after him onstage, and whenever he turned, it bunched up under his feet. Clearly, Wardrobe, exhausted, must have run amok. He was walking with the cautious older tread he used as Don Armado; and so easily can he make one accept him as he is onstage, that half a dozen of us forgot the beautiful physical balance, and grew concerned lest he trip.

I was, by general vote, delegated to enquire of Tanya if she had lost the Moiseiwitsch mind; and, as this is a query one does not have frequent opportunity to thrust at her, I willingly undertook the job.

"Isn't Don Armado's cape a little longish?" I inquired.

"I think so," said Tanya.

"It is distracting. Isn't it? Is it going to stay that way?"

"I have no idea," said Tanya. "He designed it."

"Who designed it?" I demanded, in my excitement almost raising my voice above rehearsal range.

"The master. Paul."

"Designed this costume? Don't be idiotic."

Tanya is known to be unapt to allow actors to influence her eye.

"Oh, I—" she gave a beautifully vague gesture of the right hand, indicating that it once had held a pen or brush, "I outlined it, but he wanted a few additions. Have you seen the wig and beard? They're his idea."

"Plus an extra yard of cloak?"

"He wears an earring, too," said Tanya. "It isn't there tonight. You'll see. Paul knows what he wants. It's fun to work with him."

One thing he had either wanted or allowed was to be absolutely swathed in white material over his armour, when disguised as Hector of Troy for the theatricals in Act II. He had so many yards of it that when he came on he looked like a cocoon. I chanced to be sitting near Tanya and Michael at the moment Paul came onstage with the extra yardage bundled up in his hand. He carried it, and held it high for the first few minutes, and it looked exactly like another of Tanya's mistakes; frankly, I think that even she was briefly confused.

Then of a sudden, downstage, he gave it a toss, just as he started up. The long train of white trailed over his arm and across the stage with a grace which was all of the floating romance of dreams. Why it should have been so effective I do not know, but it caught a gasp and a chuckle from all watchers. Not a laugh of amusement, but a catch of appreciative delight. For some reason, that long white line of material caught at one's heart. It was oddly touching, and oddly gallant (I don't know why, but it made me think of Sir Walter Raleigh), and throughout the season it always had the effect it had that night. Michael and Tanya simultaneously laughed with what can best be recorded as a yelp of surprised appreciation. Then they turned their heads and exchanged a look completely companionable, of pleasure, I think, in a situation created, and in the one who could snatch that situation away from them.

The *Coriolanus* run-through was a sterner matter, and an agitated

incident it proved to be.

By the way, among the Scofield mysteries, we do not know how he manages to change size onstage; but Don Armado was several inches taller, and twenty pounds heavier, than Coriolanus was. But then, we were growing accustomed to several Scofields.

The early costume hits of the evening were those of the Roman mob. They were the most effective beggars I've ever seen. They were also a rabble carefully chosen from among our best actors, with Max Helpmann leading them, and Guy Belanger, Douglas Chamberlain, and Jim Peddie among the mob. They were never a faceless rabble; every one was an individual. Their rags delighted us and inspired them. They were not just rags; every outfit had character.

Several of these citizens turned up later as soldiers; and as the story unfolded in Act I, it turned out that there would be double as much activity backstage as onstage during the battle scenes. There were several quick changes, and during the run-through we had frequent ludicrous waits while actors onstage stared expectantly at entrances through which nobody came. All of these were delays for costume changes. Since Michael would not dream of slowing a scene onstage just to give backstage convenience, Jack Hutt, Dinah and the dressers were frantically arranging to make these changes as swiftly as the scene. Even seconds were counted, and saved by having the dressers race down with coats and packs at the ready, and by sewing some pieces of costume together so that they could slip on as one.

Paul had the swiftest of these swift changes. During the battle scenes, he had two exits when he had to race off and switch to a battered uniform, acquire his visible wounds, and race on again without losing the mood of the scene. Immediately after, he had to return to Rome in triumph—months in the campaign, but minutes in the play—wearing a golden oak-leaf garland and accepting the triumphs he had won in the fray.

One of these exits was forty-seven seconds, another for one minute and three seconds, and the third for just under four minutes. To keep the time element clear onstage, the audience must receive no sense of rush; yet the business of dressing in seconds, and arriving back on stage with no visible change of mood, is quite a skill. These changes were worked smoothly by having Dick Blackburn, Paul's dresser, go down under the stage and wait for him. During the first few seconds'

exit, Paul unhooked his tunic, thus exposing an already battle-stained shirt front; and while Dick threw dust on his boots, he applied his forehead scar.

(The wounds of Coriolanus had been made to Paul's specifications. He had caused great consternation earlier by insisting upon three-dimensional wounds. Blood is kept to a minimum at Stratford, and three-dimensional blood was a novelty. The problem naturally gravitated to Fred Nihda, who solved it by making strips of plastic, curved to fit Paul's brow and throat and coloured to match his make-up. Centred on each strip was a ridge of plastic coagulated blood. Fred made the first trial of these by appearing in Wardrobe, wearing them, at midnight. The ensuing panic proved their effectiveness.)

In Paul's next exit, his tunic, already loose, was exchanged for a torn and dirty one, and his long hair was pulled loose. During the longer exit after this, he had just time to stride to his dressing-room, comb and tie back the wig and set the oak wreath upon it, then hook up the tunic and have it covered by his long scarlet military cloak. In this case, he was usually out of his dressing-room a minute in advance; but in no case was there time to waste or fumble.

One and three-quarter minutes after the exit from that scene, he had to reappear in a gown of humility.

This gown itself had posed a problem. It is named as a gown several times in the text. In Roman costume, it would have offered no problem; in the nineteenth century, it did. Paul and Tanya had solved the problem by the direct method of building the gown on him. They had draped yards of material around the two yards of Scofield until they had an effect they could use. They ended with a white, loose-sleeved robe, not unlike a cassock, black-belted and with a black stole across the shoulders. It was clear and powerful onstage, in a scene which Paul made more so; but for myself, I wish I'd seen the fitting-room scene. It was highlighted by the fact that the two materials originally used set up a charge of static electricity and literally electrified Paul, Dinah, Tanya, Ivan, and the room. So wild did it grow that Paul had tiny burns dotted over his chest and shoulders, and they had to abandon the room for a while until the charge was gone.

The difficulty had been overcome by the time the costume arrived

onstage. Any sparks seen there were the actor's own.

These swift changes were arranged to such split-second detail that Paul's dresser was being warned by a signal light to be in readiness. As usual, everyone involved came out front staggered, for through the speed and efficiency, Paul still could joke. Ivan came out at intermission, wearing the beatific look of a satisfied seer.

"Did you see the battle scenes?" he asked. We had.

"How did he do them?"

"In full. He's playing it full out."

"Yes. Well, in those minutes backstage, with all of us tense with hurry, he was joking. He never wasted a gesture, but no tension and plenty of time to be polite to us. Do you see what I meant by the 'possessed' story?"

I think that we all were beginning to see.

The worst shock which Tanya gave us in *Coriolanus*, was a triumph. Aufidius wears throughout the play the black uniform of a Volscian general, and wears it so effectively that he makes it entirely his own.

Later Coriolanus joins the Volscians to punish the Rome which banished him. In Act III, when he came striding on, he came in a black replica of Aufidius' uniform.

Every nerve at the pit of my stomach knotted in agony for him, at this inescapable proof of a degradation he had given himself.

I told Tanya, the first time I could find her, of the effect it had had, which was almost anguish. She was delighted.

"Oh, then you see," she cried, and hooked me by the arm, "then you see why I don't think the secrets of costumes should be told beforehand. You do see. Yes. You're on my side, now."

17....

“I WISH you'd make a record of that,” I said to Lou Appelbaum, who was stretched out at his ease in the aisle beside me.

“What, of *that*?” asked Lou, and sat up, as if he needed to peer at the source of the music we were hearing.

“Yes, all the *Coriolanus* marches. I love them. I hate to think that when the season's done, they'll disappear.”

“That damned corn!” said Lou affectionately.

The technical rehearsals for plays at Stratford are as harrowing and exciting as any rehearsals they run. In them, the cast act as puppets, while the technical background details of staging are settled one by one. Lighting, music, and cues are set at these rehearsals. The orchestra have arrived, the composer is present, the light cues are worked in, and the technical details of cueing entrances are finally set.

There is no one spot backstage at Stratford from which the entering actors can see the stage. Those plunging or running entrances are taken blind, and are a matter of faith and teamwork. In some cases they can be taken from a cue heard from the stage, but in many they must be made from a light cue flashed from the prompter's box.

The prompter's box, or crow's-nest, is high in the ceiling of the auditorium. In it, the Stage Manager and the electrician hold out through each play, with a full view of the action far below them.

The Stage Manager, the only one of the backstage group who can see the play, works with his book of the play before him, all cues marked in the widened margins, and besides him a rack of switches which control the cue lights at the ramp entrances, at the aisle entrances, backstage, in the underworld, and in the orchestra loft. On his desk is a two-way radio, through which he hears the action of the play, and which, by the flick of a switch, can connect him with his assistant stage manager, backstage. It can also connect him with

the stage itself, as there is a speaker just under the peak of the stage balcony through which he could theoretically give a prompt. In the event of serious accident onstage, it would be the Stage Manager, working by signal and by intercom, who would have to cover the emergency.

The lighting at Stratford is taken care of by a character named Len Smith—and Len is a character. He strides about the theatre, invariably dressed in spotless khakis, clippers and screwdrivers sheathed at his belt, usually accompanied by a big black cigar. He regards the high jinks of the artists with affectionate amusement, and an inner satisfaction that his own profession involves the more predictable qualities of watts and volts. He not only does the lighting for the shows, but he and his staff installed the wiring of the theatre itself.

Len has lit every show in Stratford's nine-year history, but he saw his first play last year. This came about when they put in their new electronic lighting board and console, and set them up in the prompter's box. Always before, the switchboard had been backstage and light cues taken by signal. Since he couldn't leave the switchboard, for seven years he had known all the actors, but had never seen one of the plays.

The new board and its console, which landed Len up in the prompter's box with a view of proceedings (he sits there eating peanuts during the scenes which don't interest him, and with a pair of powerful binoculars at hand to view the ones which do), also gave a greater accuracy to the lighting on the stage. If an actor chances, for instance, to slow or speed up by one second the final speech of a scene, the changing lights can now keep pace with him. Before, Len had to pull the dimmers on faith in the actors; a faith so well placed, incidentally, that only the management of Stratford were dissatisfied. The final effects had drawn no critical comments from the press.

The lighting of the Stratford stage is unique, as is the stage itself. The light floods down from three sides, and is entirely white. Only its intensity can be varied, never its tint. One result of this is that shadows have to be painted on costumes and armour, and indeed, on faces, as otherwise no curves or highlights would show. Another is that the mood and weather of a scene on Stratford's stage must be set by the actor. There is no yellow flood of sunlight to establish

a bright morning; no cold drift of blues to give a winter light. There are no magical effects of colour to set the romantic scenes or the sentimental. All the lights of Stratford do is light the actors. The mood, the time, the temperature, depend on them.

One side effect of this lighting is the predominance it gives to certain positions onstage, enhancing some of those already powerful. Because the lights are on three sides, and the audience is also on three sides, an actor standing at the side of the stage and facing inward, is not getting a bright blaze of light upon his face. The only way to give it to him would be to turn the lights blindingly into the eyes of the audience on that side behind him. Blinding the audience is not considered part of the game. So, it is only looking outward from the sides, or forward from the stage centre or balcony, that the actor gets that blaze of face light which centres the attention on him.

Like everyone else at Stratford, Len Smith works peculiar hours. The lighting plots for the three plays had been worked out long before technical rehearsal, and, not to interfere with other rehearsals, had been gone through in the middle of the night.

They had been run under the supervision of Jack Hutt and the directors, without the actors present. The first run-through had been to set the lights for the season, so that they would cover the requirements of all three plays. This is a matter of insuring that the fifty-two individual lights cover the whole stage area equally, with no bad shadows, no overlapping, and no lights tilted to blind the audience.

After this initial work, each director runs through his own play and its light cues with Len, Jack Hutt and his Stage Manager. They set the plot, and cues are marked in the Stage Manager's notebook. The Stage Manager knows, for instance, that light cue 6 is for *Coriolanus*' entrance from the left ramp. Len's business is to get that entrance lit as the director wants it, and once the details are set so that he knows the number of the switches on his console, the reasons for it cease to be his problem, and it is just cue 6. This is set at the advance lighting rehearsal; but is not until the technical rehearsal, with the actors present, that the Stage Manager will be able to ascertain on just what syllable of the speeches onstage he will have to give light cue 6 to Len, and the entrance cue to Paul.

On his console, Len can set up in advance the varying degrees of

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brightness of the fifty-two lights that will be needed for the next cue, and when the cue comes can activate the entire setting by one motion of the hand. At the lighting rehearsals these changes are plotted in detail, as the directors bring in the light they need for emphasis or change of scene.

At the technical rehearsals, the play is run through from the beginning with all actors onstage; but rather than acting through each scene, jumps are taken to those parts of the scene which include the cues. A long speech will not be run, nor a long scene just between two people, unless it includes some phrase or movement on which a light cue, an entrance cue, or a music cue must be given. The extra time is used to go over repetitively the bits which are needed for the cues. This is an interesting trick for the actors to perform, and a solid test of their technical skill, for, without the rhythm of the scenes to work up to their entrances and exits, they yet must play out those bits onstage with precisely the timing which they will use in the performance itself. All of this is done on split-second timing, a cue light going on a syllable rather than upon a word, or one swift gesture being the one which will set all in action backstage. Often it will take eight to ten tries to get an entrance, or a light, or a musical interjection timed to suit the director. Especially if it is Michael's play!

In technical rehearsals, Michael turns engineer, and the set-up of his plays is an engineering accomplishment—precision engineering!

At the *Coriolanus* technical, the orchestra was present in the orchestra loft, behind and above the stage balcony. This loft is right up in the roof of the theatre, just opposite the prompter's box, and is open at the top, so that the music floats upward, strikes against the ridged and fluted roof of the auditorium, and drifts down upon the audience, dispersed so that it is impossible to tell from just what spot it comes. Acoustically, it is superb; but it also means that from their position the orchestra cannot see what happens in the auditorium, nor can they hear the voices from stage with sufficient clarity to dare to take a cue from them. They must be brought in by cue light from the S.M.'s board.

Alf Stromberg conducts the orchestra, and also chooses the musicians.

"We have to catch them young and strong," he says. He means it.

There is no chance of physical inertia for the orchestra, any more than for anyone else under that roof.

Alf Stromberg had been present for three weeks before this, with piano, to grow familiar with the musical score and the progress of the scenes. As the play tightens up, however, that score must change because of the motion of actors and of the musicians themselves. Sometimes it even changes for the costumes. In *King John* the previous year, the few bars given to cover King John's entrance and cross proved adequate throughout non-dress rehearsal, but when tried at the technical it was found that the heavy robes and train the king was wearing so hampered Douglas Rain's movements that he could not cross in the time allowed; so an artistic *impasse* was reached in which it must be decided whether Lou would add two bars of music, or Tanya would cut two feet off the cloak. Tanya screamed faintly, chivalry conquered, and Lou added the two bars.

Although the musicians are theoretically situated in the musician's gallery, in *Coriolanus* this was far more theory than fact. Many of the entrances in it are to martial music, and Michael is not the man to have his soldiers marching to music which is tethered in one place. Instead, he brought his musicians down and had them approach the backstage area at the precise pace of the approaching army. Twice they marched along, playing, right under the stage, to bring an entrance party to the ramp. The stage floor acted as a sounding-board, lending a marvellously military vibration to the brasses. He also wanted trumpet calls, some with a Volscian flourish, some with a Roman, from different points of the compass; and our three trumpeters were very active indeed.

In one of Aufidius' speeches, after he has begun to turn against Coriolanus, a trumpet was used to great effect. It was cold and dark (by which, of course, I mean that John Colicos, John Vernon, Ed Holmes & Co. managed to give the impression, in full light, that it was cold, and in the dark of night), and at a break in the speech, from far away there came a few notes from a military trumpet. They floated down from the camp behind, a camp presumably on the hill, and they were strange and touching in the night-time. Aufidius heard them, and they served to turn his mind more clearly to the enemy general he had allowed to rule that camp. He went on with his speech from that point. That is a typical Michael touch; for that

distant trumpet, lonely in the night, which served to take Aufidius' mind to the camp behind him, took the audience's mind there, too. On his next line, they started from the same place, without knowing precisely why they did.

A few notes. But it took a solid twenty minutes of moving that trumpeter around backstage to find the precise position from which it would sound just distant enough, and just high enough to give the picture, while the musician could still be in sight of one of the Stage Manager's signal lights. There was even the question of when he'd get that cue light. Should the sound interrupt Aufidius? Or float in through a pause in his speech? It took a half-dozen tries, with John Colicos patient onstage, until the exact second was found.

At the very end of the play, when Volumnia returns to Rome triumphant, she was accompanied by a martial band beneath the stage, marching to the entrance with her, unseen; but she was also welcomed to Rome by wild bells ringing. The wildest thing about them was the activity it took to get them placed. They were chimes, at three different positions backstage, each one cued in by a different signal light. As the musicians and the crowd beneath the stage were also being cued, and a light change simultaneously highlighted the scene, Peter Mannering, the Stage Manager for that production, spent that scene with his fingers fairly dancing across the switches on his board.

The *Coriolanus* technical rehearsal was a joy to listen to. Both Tanya and Lou laugh easily and often, Tanya gently, Lou in a merry shout. Lou also has a melodious speaking voice which, fortunately, carries. He was using it to give directives to musicians spread all over the house.

"Alf! Alf?" to the musicians' gallery. "We need three seconds more. Put in a ta ta ta. Well, put it in that way; I'll compose it tomorrow. Just put in sound for now."

"Chimes? Where are the chimes? Answer me! Oh, there! Chimes, you're coming in too fast; and make the whole thing slower, sort of a stately dum de da. I'll give it to you later, but let the lighter chimes do the hysterical bit."

"Alf? Where's your trumpeter? The Volscian trumpeter for the right ramp. We can't hear him. Doesn't he have time to get there? Out of breath? How could he be out of breath? Get him in condition

before Monday. We can't have the Volscian army peep."

"Alf, come in on that faster. Aren't you getting a signal light? Try it. No, faster! What do you mean, you need time to raise your baton? He needs time to raise his baton, Michael. Alf! Michael says to keep it in midair."

By the way, Lou sings, he does not speak, those *tirra lirras* he wants added. They're almost always echoed, instantly, by instruments backstage.

But the organizational triumph, and also the most uproarious section of the *Corio* technical, was the battle sequence. During this, Peter Mannering had 127 cues to give in thirteen minutes. As someone said, Michael had everything moving except the theatre, and there were moments when it seemed that the theatre itself might spin.

This sequence begins with Coriolanus arriving before the town of Corioli; entrance music for Coriolanus; musicians backstage; distant Volscian trumpets; trumpeters upstairs; light cues for entrances and arrival; further cues for shouts offstage.

Off goes Coriolanus, on comes another part of the Roman army, then Coriolanus again and his capture by the Volscians. Cue for the crash of the closing gates. More Romans, more Volscians. Coriolanus' re-entrance, wounded. A balletic battle, complete with music from an orchestra that has just raced up three flights of stairs (to the loft from under the stage) to play it, and a dimming of lights to keep it ominous. A flourish of trumpets, Volscian, Roman, from trumpeters dispatched downstairs. The duel between Coriolanus and Aufidius, brightly lit, with a musical background to come in at the end—this bit of timing being left to the S.M.'s judgment nightly, as the duel cannot possibly be fought to the split second each night.

Coriolanus collapses, and on comes the whole darned Roman army, with the orchestra marching a backstage counterpoint to them, except for the drummer, who is upstairs, ready to give a roll of the drums to signalize Coriolanus' personal triumph—a roll which must be cut short by Coriolanus himself, with one wave of his hand. Since the drummer cannot see him nor he the drummer, and since the effect depends upon the instant reaction to his command, all this must be done by light cues by the S.M. One of the technical feats of the actors at Stratford is the ability to time a move like this. That hand of Paul Scofield's had to go up at exactly the right point in the

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scene, and pause for just long enough for Peter Mannering, in the roof, to see it there. Peter's finger had to touch the switch at that instant, and the drummer stop the second that the light went out, and all so swiftly that to the watching audience it seemed one coordinated action, the silence the result of Paul's descending hand. It always did seem so.

To add to the general ferment backstage, it happened that this was the sequence in which Paul's swift changes were made. So precise were the arrangements when completed that at one point, three words before his exit, the S.M. flashed Paul's dresser a signal, the dresser instantly sloshed glue on Coriolanus' wounds, and Paul, quite literally, walked off and into them.

His changes were being made under the stage and backstage, with orchestra and armies all milling around him; but so slick and untroubled were the mechanics of this, that when, after opening, I carelessly mentioned his quick changes to a member of the audience, I received an infuriated announcement that he had not changed at all.

"Didn't you see the wounds?" I asked, one being a bloody slash across his forehead. (Three dimensional, yet!)

"You must be wrong!" she said emphatically. "He wasn't wounded. I would have noticed that. It was wonderful acting, you could see he was exhausted, but it was part of Paul Scofield's acting. I'm sure you're wrong. I would have noticed any costume change."

Hooray! Levels of the conscious and subconscious exactly where they were supposed to be! It was wonderful acting, no argument to that bit, but it was also an actor's technique, the physical coordination and psychic understanding needed to pull a trick like this, both on and off the stage.

During that question period after the high-school matinée of *Romeo and Juliet*, Bruno Gerussi was fielding questions on everything from Shakespeare to history, to theatre, to an actor's art.

Suddenly a young voice from the balcony shouted, "Do you or the others ever ad lib lines?"

Bruno whirled and stared, and as he brightened with laughter they had a brief look at the real Bruno, Bruno at his best.

"Ad lib, on this stage?" he demanded. He rocked back on his heels, rolled up his eyes in horror, and gave a full-arm gesture to say

no. "Believe me, not one of us is so clever! Not one of us is quick enough to ad lib, on this stage!"

What he had in mind was the chaos which would ensue from any such trifling with the set-up. A careless change in the lines, from forgetfulness or error, is the major terror of the S.M.'s life. As Peter Mannering, for instance, runs his eye down the pages of script in the battle scenes, with quick glances keeping him in touch with the action onstage, one hand out on the switches for the next cues, to set into action all of those departments backstage which have to depend on his timing, he is himself completely dependent on the syllabic accuracy of the actors onstage, if these outside effects and entrances are to crash into the action with the right impact.

The plays do grow and deepen with the season; gestures, intonations, richer readings do get added. But, as to ad libs, if an actor is clever enough (and Bruno would be), yet there is none so selfish. The shows are staged as a unit, and there's faith between the backstage group and those out front.

The cleverness is that into this complexity each can set his own performance. That's part of the discipline, much of the power, all of the skill.

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DRESS-REHEARSAL week has no chaos and no confusion, but it works up to a pressure which has to be lived to be believed.

The difference between having three plays in dress rehearsal instead of only one is more than just tripling the effect of one. There is no resting on any attainment. If an actor who is in two plays reaches a point of satisfaction with his role in one of them, he must drive himself to lift his role in the other to the same level. That united, powerful drive of the Company as artists, and of the theatre behind them, is never more evident than through dress rehearsal. The plays will be tested before the public, but this is the testing time before themselves. In it, there are no excuses, no evasions. There is no mercy, not in dress-rehearsal week.

The pressure is powerful and all-absorbing; and, as Michael pointed out, it is a pressure towards an ephemeral something which will exist upon a stage and then be done—gone like a puff of air, unless it lives on through the lives of those who see. As I write, the three plays have existence. When you read, they are gone, forever gone. No power, no combination, could kindle again quite the same conflagration. They, and the efforts which made them, exist but in the minds or lives of those who saw.

In dress-rehearsal week, however, they had not come to existence, and all the decision, all the artistry, all the effort were still driving towards an uncertain effect. Every work of art is an act of faith, and this act, indeed this triple act, was an act of faith by 264 people plus one—Will Shakespeare.

The plays compete against themselves even in the theatre, and up in the green-room actors mulled the question of which play would come in first.

George McCowan had ceased holding back *Henry*, and was now driving it through; but the lack of splendid detail in his rehearsals had

made them duller than Michael's, and some of the cast were concerned about the play. George himself was not concerned; he faced the dress rehearsal with the quiet authority which a good director needs.

"It's more fun this way than directing for television," he admitted. "In TV, you're close to the cast at the beginning, but in the last days, cameras and technicians inevitably involve the director, and so he and his cast move apart. Onstage, it's just the opposite, and this week we are the closest of all. This week, I'm still part of the production." Then he smiled, the quiet, rather winsome smile with which George greets his own thoughts when he fears they might be taken to be sentimental, and raised the hand which bears the magnificent Mexican ring Fran Hyland gave him, and nibbled at the thumb knuckle awhile. "Until next Tuesday," he added, "and then they take it. All closeness ends. It's theirs, and not the director's at all."

"Do you mind?" I asked.

He grinned, a broad grin this time. "No," he said. "That's where we're headed. And, there's always another play."

It was hard to think of George as separated from the Company in any way. He belongs to Stratford, has acted there, and when we speak of the Company we include him as a matter of course. One never thinks of Michael as one of them! But *Henry VIII*, with no imported stars, with one of our own directors, we always thought of, and spoke of, as "the Company play".

So now, it was "next" week. Monday, *Coriolanus*, Tuesday, *Henry VIII*, Wednesday, *Love's Labour's Lost*, would open; and even between Michael's two plays, there were questionings and choice.

Above, Paul Scofield as Don Armado and his wife, Joy Parker, as a Princess of France; backstage after Love's Labour's Lost.

Below, Michael Langham and Joy Parker: "Would the lady please to turn the other cheek?"

Zoe Caldwell as Rosaline "in her last act silks, flushed with excitement and the night."





Nobody was mentally able to look at *Coriolanus* as an item; none but the director, anyway. We talked about Paul Scofield. Although it was set with magnificent precision and equipped with at least four fine performances and a flock of lesser ones beside, no audience ever awaited a star's opening with more curiosity than this audience, who would be on stage with him.

I tried to acquire opinions from Doug Campbell, Bruno Gerussi, John Colicos, and Eleanor Stuart, about *Coriolanus*, the play. These are four strong individuals, with individual viewpoints on most topics; but I ended this survey with four identical announcements that they couldn't wait to see *Coriolanus*, the man. It was generally agreed, however, that under Michael's driving direction the play had reached perfection and might be getting beyond.

So, "How is *Coriolanus*?" I asked Michael.

A quick frown. "Behindhand. Badly behind. A great deal yet to be done."

And, "How is *Coriolanus*?" I asked Paul Scofield.

"Coming, coming," he answered. "Not there yet. I hope we'll make it in time."

The only play about which the Company was divided was *Love's Labour's Lost*. That it had bright moments everybody knew, and the final scene was enough to tug at the heartstrings; but it wasn't pulling together, and in this the Scofield question was a huge grey question mark. We all loved his Don Armado, but we secretly agreed up in the green-room that it might be over the heads of the audience. But Vic Polley put a foot on a chair, leaned elbow on knee and looked out the green-room window, saying, "It's Wednesday I can't wait for. I don't know a thing about acting, but I just like to watch that Scofield guy."

The doubts about the plays, the questions, have a private delight when tossed from table to table, for there's no flinching; these are the actors' doubts of themselves. They will carry the plays in their own persons before the public, which will judge them, so even the doubts have energy and an odd, courageous force.

*The christening of Elizabeth I in Henry VIII:
"When the golden glow of the final scene swept
onstage, the audience gasped and applauded
outright."*

The dress rehearsals run throughout the final week. The first three days are exhausting, as on each day one play has a run-through in the morning—four hours; dress rehearsal at night—five hours; with dance, choir, and fencing rehearsals betweentimes. Then, at eleven o'clock in the evening, they turn the play around and run it backwards, for the final photocalls. The last scenes are photographed first. This goes until two in the morning, at least, and with no real interest in the photos, they do this extra job with patience and good humour, and a *camaraderie* among themselves which grows deeper as the night grows long.

The whole theatre is hurtling toward opening night, by this time.

Outside, the lights are checked, the grounds brought to perfection. The gardeners have cued the flowers to bloom on June 19th. Six men wash the windows of the theatre, shine them to a brightness which it will take a man-and-a-half all season to maintain. The banners are run up the flagpole in the coronet atop the theatre, and the lights tried out which will light flags, coronet, and the acre of roof.

Cleaners vacuum corridors and theatre. Box Office gets ready to move itself out front. Canteens are cleaned and readied for the season, and the working theatre withdraws from the front of the house. Jack Hutt puts up notices: "No smoking in the auditorium from this date", ("Except," adds Michael, "by directors—who must!") and "No more moving from the backstage area between scenes, or entering the auditorium from the ramps". No more watching the show in comfort from the front seats, not for actors. These seats will belong to strangers now.

The Director's table and the Stage Manager's lights are removed, and the front rows of seats screwed back into position in the space thus left vacant. The halls smell of detergent and cleaning fluids, and we begin to feel like strangers in the front regions.

Norman Freeman, House Manager, runs his own rehearsals, as his fifty-six ushers and ticket-takers are coached for their jobs. In the office, six special telephone lines, twenty-two extra typewriters, and two teletype machines are set up for the reviewers who will file their stories from there.

And night by night the dress rehearsals run.

The final dress rehearsal of each play may be, if its director wishes,

opened to the public. All three were opened this year.

By this time, each play was taking a full day, and because a week end intervened before opening, an extra dress was held. With *Coriolanus* dress rehearsal Thursday, *Henry* Friday, and *Love's Labour's* Saturday, the jump would be too long for actors and for play if the opening production had to wait from Thursday to Monday. Therefore an extra dress of *Coriolanus*, open to the public, was held on Sunday night.

The audiences who come to these dress rehearsals are mostly Stratford people, and they're apt to prove an undependable example of what will occur when the regular audience arrives. Some come from genuine interest, some are friends of the theatre, but many come to catch a free show, while others come for a lark or to welcome old favourites back.

Consequently, the reactions are not necessarily indicative of what will happen later, but as the first outside reactions we have had, they are listened for eagerly by those who mount the plays.

The *Henry* dress was positively funny, but it was funny in ways which Shakespeare had not had in mind. Brian's costumes caused such a thrill that they raised giggles at most disconcerting times. Douglas Campbell is a resident of Stratford, and anything he did raised a twitter of appreciation. He could have played that night, doing jumps and handsprings; reactions would have been the same.

Doug Rain came as close to temper as Doug, onstage, does come, and delivered the "Farewell to all my greatness" speech at such velocity that the audience knew that they were hearing an actor saying something splendid, and applauded madly, which is not the mood the speech is intended to convey. It turned out that the cardinal's beretta, flat against his ears, was throwing his own voice back at him, and drowning out all else. For the effect, speak aloud, right now, then place your hands flat against your ears and say the same phrase over; then try to imagine reaching the subtleties of a subtle speech with your own words racketing back upon you so.

Kate Reid also had headdress trouble, but not tightness this time. An actress in love with audiences, and vice versa, she gained a flurry of applause no matter what she did; but she came offstage tearing Brian's Tudor headdress from her. She'd been acting blind—or rather, deaf—for Wardrobe's passion for detail had gone so far that

they had lined, interlined, and inter-interlined it; and it would hold up for a season safely, but only if Kate could not hear. Because of it, she had been unable to hear audience reaction (and even stillness, a good actress needs to hear, for live theatre is a two-way conversation); so she'd been overacting, pulling out every trick in the book in her cloud of silence, and waiting to get offstage to have something done about this. In this predicament, she also let her own emotion in Katharine's death speech overcome her, not onstage, but after she came off. It took her twenty minutes to cease crying, apologizing while she cried. She wept not for Kate, but for Katharine; Kate is one actress who lives her roles. The audience had relished every move she made onstage, but she was in a fit of professional anguish.

Jack Creley died, or rather delivered his death speeches, magnificently, the arms so still that only the fingers of one hand twitched. Those fingers entranced the viewers, who clearly thought he was sending secret signals. He was, but he didn't know it; and once he discovered what was occurring, it never occurred again.

The *Henry* dress was just good enough and just bad enough to key us up, toward Tuesday; and this is what a dress rehearsal is for.

The two most heartfelt and rewarding gasps of the evening were both tributes to sheer beauty. One was for the golden-cloud effect of the final scene; the other for Pat Galloway's Anne Bullen, the second she walked onstage.

Love's Labour's Lost, on Saturday night, was another matter, and a lot of us attended because it was the play concerning which we had most doubt. We did not doubt it could be good; we simply did not know yet if it would jell. We did not know if its potential goodness would prove to be communicative or no.

The cast were so engrossed with two issues that the play was almost incidental. The first was that Julie Harris, last year's star, was watching, and her friends in the cast knew no audience for whom they'd rather act.

The second was that Michael had arranged a curtain call of such intricacy and violence that bets were being taken backstage as to who would break a leg.

"Going to see the play?" Michael asked me just before the dress.

"I'm coming to see the curtain call. What do you think will hap-

pen?" Even in repeated rehearsal, they hadn't managed without mishap.

"A gorgeous shambles, probably," said Michael equably. "A couple may get knocked down tonight, but they'll be all right next week."

"I thought you were having a good time, dreaming up this one."

"I was," said Michael. "That's part of the fun of this Company. You can ask the impossible of them and they'll do it. It often makes it a temptation to ask."

The impossible in question was a running curtain call in which thirty-one people were racing up and down ramps and stairs and crossing in centre stage. I saw Kate just before the play, in which she plays a small (for her) role, and made some remark about it.

"Play?" she demanded. "What play? I'm not even thinking about the play. I'm suffering through it, to that curtain call."

Bill Needles and Jack Creley were coaching her for it, as if she had never been on a stage before.

Only the downstairs auditorium is opened for the dress rehearsals. This is the last chance for check-up, and the balcony is kept free for director and theatre personnel so that they can range and see the production from all sides.

"I'm glad we have a good house tonight," said Michael, looking down at them. "It's time to get Paul before an audience."

He couldn't have wanted to get Paul before an audience any more eagerly than Paul himself wanted to be there. "I find no audience strange," he had told me. "Just by the act of gathering together, to be an audience, they become familiar to me. Even in Russia, the audience didn't seem foreign to me, and there was the language barrier there. The real difference here is not the audience, it's the stage. It creates an entirely new relationship between us." He smiled. "It means that I'll be closer to them than ever before."

"And you can't wait to get out there and try it, can you?"

The half look away, the light which is almost shyness, and a simple, "Indeed, I shall love it. It will be fun."

This was to be the night of that first meeting, and as Act I of *Love's Labour's Lost* unfolded, all our doubts turned out to be justified.

To begin with, the local audience had a lot of pals to welcome home. Kate Reid and Eric Christmas, in secondary roles, each gained

a personal ovation. They could do nothing wrong; consequently, they did quite a lot. The first scene with the four men, although it gained a welcome for Leo, ran heavy, and John Colicos was working like a beaver to lift it, thereby losing the effect of several of his lines. By the time Paul Scofield appeared, we were up against near disaster.

For Paul himself, exactly the thing which we had feared, happened. He was fifty yards above the viewers' heads. He wasn't what they expected, at all. Here was the man who was to be star of this season, whom they had read about; here he was, with queer gestures, walking stiffly, and so much *older* than expected. Why, he had grey hair! They didn't know what to make of him; but the hazard of hazards, which all of us had overlooked, was that he was accompanied, as his page, by a local boy named Murray Scott.

Murray, bright as a button, a precocious and attractive youngster, was making his first appearance onstage in his home town, tricked out in cunning costumes by a yet more cunning Moiseiwitsch, and bringing with him, as his foil, one of the greatest actors of the age.

The audience found Murray just too, too cute for words, and so did Murray. It is much to the boy's credit that on this, his first night of professional theatre, he didn't get more out of hand. His personal admiration, amounting to idolatry, for Paul Scofield had given him a high regard for discipline onstage, so there was no danger of his muffing a line or missing an action; but, with the welcome which friends and neighbours gave him, his own actions gained projection and intensity. On the boy's part, it was spontaneous, it was inevitable, it was part of his youth and high spirits; but the audience was acting worse than Murray. There were sighs and moans of appreciation for that sweet child, whatever he did, and tremulous exclamations about him popping up like corn.

That the scene was kept a scene at all, in the context of the play, was one of the greatest demonstrations of technique and timing by a master that any of us are ever apt to see. How in thunder even Paul Scofield fielded some of the balls that Murray threw him, I will never know. The exhibition he was giving, the sheer *expertise*, plus the inner knowledge of the spot that he had been caught in, was reducing all of us in the balcony to the verge of collapse. Michael laughed silently, appreciatively, until there was a glitter of tears in

his eyes. Tanya was in a sympathetic anguish of merriment near him, and I was reduced to such helplessness that I had to stop looking at the stage; while below us, the audience sighed and gasped as they found their Murray Scott wonderful. That queer man onstage with him, so implausibly the star of this year's season, was all right, of course, in his own way, but he just sort of *stood* there, while their own little boy, their Murray, was doing everything so well! He really carried the scenes, they could see that, and they rewarded him with their applause.

I staggered out at the end of Don Armado's and Moth's second scene together, and straight into the arms of Ivan.

"Did you see it?" I was still wiping tears from my eyes.

"How did he do it?" asked Ivan. "How did he do it? And, *why* did he do it? To risk his first entrance to a New World stage, acting with a child! I suppose it's the same old answer; it's Paul Scofield, and that odd unselfishness of his."

In this case, we felt it might also prove to be odd insanity.

I popped downstairs before intermission, on appointment. An artist had wanted to sketch Paul for a newspaper. The artist himself had missed a previous engagement, but Paul had said that if I'd bring him down during the break in *Love's Labour's* dress, he'd let him do a quick sketch of him. I appeared with the artist, and found Paul smoking contentedly in his dressing-room, quite unperturbed, his long legs stretched out and his feet, in their bowed shoes, up on a chair. He'd slipped into a worn dressing-gown, but was wearing beard, wig, and make-up; his pipe was in his powerful hand, and a dangling pearl aglitter in his ear.

"They're a lovely audience," was his opening comment, and he was genuinely proffering me information. I think I blinked. But this was official business, so I said, "Yes, they are, Mr. Scofield. May we do your picture now?"

And Mr. Scofield said, yes, we might. So the artist and I came in and settled down.

It's always fun talking to Paul when he's in his Don Armado make-up, for the advantage changes sides. The adhesive on beard and brows restrains his expression; and since his expression is a mirror of the swift mind behind, it sometimes actually restrains the mind.

"I can't *think* in this," he will say impatiently, with a touch of two fingers to the beard or moustache. "I can't smile freely, or laugh. It hampers me. It makes me feel held down."

Since it is a steady temptation, in talking with him, to follow his expressions rather than one's own line of thought, and since this gives him subtle domination of most conversations, I always found it fun to talk to him when he was so hampered. It gave the talk a brand-new element.

In this case, of course, we were also limited by the presence of a stranger, and the politenesses afloat around that dressing-room were really touching to be heard. We managed to communicate, naturally, but we had to do most of it in code. I didn't dare drive Paul to announcement of his opinions about a scene which had gone wrong, before a member of the press, and before opening; but we managed to cover the ground.

"Is it difficult acting with child actors, Mr. Scofield?" I enquired sweetly.

"Occasionally," said Mr. Scofield, with a bright glance of his quite unhampered eyes.

"I thought Murray was very attractive this evening, didn't you?"

"Very attractive. He's an extraordinarily bright boy."

"Yes. The audience enjoyed him."

A long pause, and a puff at the pipe. "It is a very, very friendly audience."

We wandered on in desultory conversation while the artist sketched swiftly, completed his sketch, then entered the talk. Paul apologized for the inconvenience of having to sketch him in this heavy make-up, and regretted the lack of other opportunity.

"That's all right," said the artist. "But tell me, doesn't it ever make a man like you feel silly, wearing all that stuff?"

For a long moment, I thought Mr. Scofield was not amused. A very long moment. I saw my duty and I did it; I cut the conversation off.

Afterwards, I went back to thank him for giving his time, for half an hour in the midst of this sort of performance is a very large courtesy indeed for a star to give. He took it negligently, then went back, more freely now, to the subject of Murray.

"Child actors are always difficult, from the fact of being chil-

dren," he said. "At that age, you cannot expect them really to play another role. You have to take the best of themselves and use that, so acting with them is apt to lift one right out of the play. But Murray is far, far better than most. He's a bright boy, as child actors go, and with a professional point of view. He'll be all right through the season. I haven't minded acting with Murray, at all."

"It was a wonderful performance," I said, and I didn't mean Murray. "But, a pity. Your first New World audience!"

"It's a very nice audience," Paul answered instantly. Then, suddenly the eagerness, the excitement, a snap of the fingers to illustrate a quality he could not name. "It's alert, vital, exciting. It's—" He tossed his head, the eyes brightened, the make-up contrived to reduce his smile. He set a finger to the curve of beard where it had caught him, the smile, not quite repressible, subduing itself to the slightest quiver on the curve of his lip. "I shall enjoy this season. I know!" Paul Scofield said. It was beyond me how he could think so, at that point.

I wandered up to see the final scene, saddened to realize that we'd been right, and that his Don Armado did not come across. However, he did better in the last scene; it went beautifully, and captured its audience just the way it should. The curtain call was absolutely delicious. Seldom have so many bodies been seen hurtling at such pace across a stage. Nobody broke a leg, although there were some bruises.

The applause was happy, though not sustained; and the single with which Don Armado concluded, by Michael's direction, seemed absurd. I wondered if it embarrassed Paul, but didn't ask him. Some shred of common sense must have remained.

Sunday was a lovely day.

In a way, the Sunday performance is, for the actors, the opening of the season. In the afternoon, there is a religious service (non-denominational) in the theatre. It is a service in which the Company rededicate themselves to this, their life. It has been held every year since the theatre opened—the first year, to give blessing to the enterprise; in succeeding years, because the Company themselves requested it.

It is held in the auditorium of the theatre. The ministers come in

upon the stage. Outsiders are admitted; the hymns are sung by massed choirs from Stratford's churches. It is a touching service, very simple; and there is something moving, to one who has watched the plays evolve, in seeing the stage become briefly an altar, while one can look along the rows, and there, where the audience will soon come to look upon them, see the bowed heads of commanding actors as they ask blessing on the moment when this stage must be their own.

That service releases all the dress-rehearsal tensions. Paul came whirling in at five o'clock that Sunday on daughter Sarah's bicycle, looking as if he were going to a picnic instead of opening in a tremendous role. Michael was moving quietly about the theatre, talking with Jack Hutt about final arrangements. There was an aura of happy expectancy throughout the dressing-rooms. I never saw the cast more attractive, all in their highest of high spirits.

The audience flooded in until the doors had to be closed against them. Up in the balcony, we looked down on the strangers, and wondered what they would see on stage tonight. It was all a surprise, like an opening of a new play, for *Coriolanus* is not known, as the other plays are, and neither was this Paul.

It struck.

Right from the first second, when the rabble came on, singing, and Max Helpmann's voice stopped them, it struck absolutely right. Douglas Campbell as Menenius came on, and—the play had taken over. The local audience did not welcome him as Doug Campbell tonight; they accepted him as Menenius. Even we in the balcony ceased thinking of these as actors we knew, and accepted the play they brought to us. We did not criticize, this night; we watched.

Up the ramp raced Martius, later Coriolanus, and the flutter of applause which gave him welcome was not staged or phony. He had wrenched it from them, just by that entrance; he seized his audience as he came.

The play raced through at a prodigious pace. It had sparkle, it was true, dead on; and centring it was a performance of such warmth, such vitality and meaning that its match has seldom been seen on any stage. We had waited to see what Paul would do; well, we were seeing. Paul was flying! Inspiration, power, passion—he was showing all that night.

The production was magnificent around him. We forgot the means by which it had become so; we who best had known them, we forgot that these were our friends before us. The play took over, it came alive, it was fresh and clear and bright. Paul took the play hands down, and he took it without having had to have the scenes warped to that purpose. He gave the others their due and led them to their finest, and then he took it back. They loved him, that he could. He gathered his audience to himself as he did so, and every response was direct, and they loved the play.

It was a fantastic night, with hearts beating high; and this night the audience, captured, were fully a part of the game. Applause was rich and warm and rushed in at the right moments; the moments subtly commanded by the man who commanded the stage.

The whole theatre was one great vibration of sharing—audience, Company, sharing a wonderful night; those who had created, those who were creating, and those without whom they would have been nothing, the audience who had come. The sounds, the sight, the action, the beautiful lines, the fretful screams of rage, the high cries of elation, the voices dropped down to tenderness—everything came across. Every note, every nuance. Everything struck just as it should strike so the details are not remembered, but the emotion is. I think none of us who lived that night will ever forget it; oh, the facts may fade, but not what it did to us.

The curtain calls were an ovation. This audience, a rehearsal audience, moved to cheers! Loud cheers, sustained ones. This never happens; but Paul didn't know that, and he stood centre stage, shy, delighted, knowing what he had done, yet touched that these would tell him so in this way. That love of his for an audience is a deep, direct, happy love.

The audience filed out, not talking, but silent with the knowledge of an hour they had lived.

We plummeted down the stairs, to backstage.

There was a sense of jubilation. Actors looking at one another and saying, "Well, how was *that*?" Questions, incredulity, a great glad wonder. We were all breathless, all exhilarated; yet save for a question, or a word of individual congratulation, nobody dared say it. Nobody. We knew what we had here, now at last we knew it; but, we did not open till tomorrow, and none dared name what we

had seen tonight.

I remember it as a blur of faces, joyous faces, flushed beneath the heavy grease paint, bright eyes with the curved eye lines around them, smiles distorting make-up meant to be severe. We all moved about the backstage area, in and out of dressing-rooms, clinging together from a great united knowledge, held from parting because it was a knowledge which we must not state. I remember being so proud of Doug Campbell that I got a lump in my throat and couldn't tell him, but had such a clasp of his hand that I know that he knew. Michael was moving about among his actors, saying, "Notes in the green-room, as soon as you're ready. Notes in the green-room, please." But tonight, his voice would not attain to its note of crispness, and he could not quell his smile even while he spoke. He and Paul ran up the stairs together—there was no line of light between them now—Michael saying as sternly as he could, "There's a very great deal to be done yet."

"A great deal," Paul agreed gravely.

Tanya passed me, bright-eyed, almost speechless. I took off in pursuit.

"How does it feel?" I asked her, who saw it all first in her mind's eye. "No, please tell me. When you've done the sketches, and seen them grow, is the reality better or worse? How does it feel, to you who did it, to see it on the stage?"

Out of the richness of the night, she answered.

"Sometimes," she said, "one looks at the stage and wonders, 'Did I do that?' in horror, but once in a while—" and the glance away at a vision only her eye could muster, and then the soft admission, "Once in a while, it's simply wonderful!"

Once in a while. And this night was once in a lifetime, in theatre; and nobody wanted to say it, nobody dared to say it, but one could feel the knowledge aquiver in the air.

Michael and Paul talked late and long.

From Michael's office, the words indistinguishable but the voices clear, came their conversation, eager, earnest, with a lift of excitement in it, warm with all the knowledge of creative life. Two professionals, putting the finishing touches on their creation, two friends talking late in an almost empty theatre, their voices making their own melody in the night.

19...

THERE was nowhere to park on opening day.

The town had been taken over; strangers in our restaurants, strangers in our parking places. The theatre was full of strangers. The press, one hundred strong, arrived. They swarmed in and out of the office, and we answered their questions as best we could. Stratford's opening is a social event as well as a dramatic one, and we handed out social lists, cast lists, and general information.

The office was a shambles. Desks were twisted awry; and every available desk, plus a lot of extras made for this occasion, had typewriter, paper, and carbon for the use of the forty critics. (This is the only place where so many critics file their reviews from the theatre itself.) The desks had to be set askew so that the critics would not see one another's work, or be diverted by facial expressions. Private offices were cleared out for those who filed by telephone; and two teletype machines and their operators were installed by Canadian National Telegraphs.

The corridor behind the dressing-rooms was filled with flowers, awaiting delivery. Telegrams were all over the bulletin board, and bunches of them in the actors' mail boxes. There was a great stillness around the dressing-rooms and corridors.

All of us still had a glow remaining from the night before. We knew what we had to offer to this public. Why should we fear the superstitions about too good a dress performance? Why care about Stratford's first-night jinx? It had not been a haphazard performance. It was solid, certain; they could turn the trick again.

I rushed home in mid-afternoon to dress. Two years before, in England, I had made a date for this opening, and saw no reason to cancel it just because I was working here. Bob was coming out on the special train run from Toronto for the opening. I picked him up at the station.

We dashed back to the house. I made full dress fuller, while Bob and Marge Crehan (the friend with whom I live when in Stratford) chatted of this and that. They even mentioned topics they had seen in the papers. Extraordinary! Once I had been literate, also; but I hadn't really read a paper in ten weeks.

We headed for the buffet supper that is given in the arena each opening for the visiting V.I.P.'s. There were a thousand of them this time, some by invitation, some with purchased tickets. Cameramen, social reporters, and columnists were bunched around the entrance. Flash bulbs were popping everywhere. It was a full-dress occasion, the men in dinner jackets, most of them white; the women with superb hair styles, jewels, and some of the loveliest gowns this continent—or any continent—could supply, originals of the great designers.

The arena filled with the sound of eager voices:

"We saw Scofield last year in England. He's a splendid actor."

"How does Langham dare to put on three almost unknown plays, this year? Isn't it risky?" Yes, but he's a man for taking risks.

"Joan! You mean, you work here? How wonderful! But tell me—what are they like, the actors?"

"I read *Coriolanus* last night, and I hope that they have understood that the true underlying theme is . . ." I hoped so too—"they" read it several months ago.

Bob had to answer most of the questions. He thought it funny, and he did it well. He doesn't often see me speechless.

"Tired?" he asked.

"No. Maybe a bit tense."

"You must eat." We fought our way to the buffet, then settled down with laden plates and watched the crowd.

"What do the actors think of this?" Bob asked abruptly.

"It's considered one reason that the first-night play never succeeds. A restless audience, too keyed up, a few with too many drinks."

"Then why risk Scofield?"

"It's no risk! This play can take even this audience. Believe me, Bob, it can!"

"So sure?"

"So sure!"

The voices grew high-pitched, clattered like static; yet it was ex-

citing, a different excitement from any we'd known. And these were the ones who could give our plays reality; they were essential. The audience had come. I envied them. We had a stunning secret; they'd have the surprise.

We forced our way to the door. Nobody else seemed to think of leaving; it was not seven yet. Opening-night curtain is eight o'clock instead of eight-thirty, to give the reviewers time afterwards to file. In half an hour or so, the Festival regulars—the backbone of it—would begin to urge people toward the door.

The river drive for the quarter-mile to the theatre was already busy with people.

I left Bob to fend for himself in the theatre lobby, while I made my contacts. Outside on the keyhole drive, the TV truck was drawn up. I ran across to talk to the producer. All the drive was lined with people, sitting on the wall, or walking toward the theatre. A few cars came in, dropped their passengers, slid out again.

TV, radio, both to go on the air at seven-thirty. Curtain on the dot of eight. I squared with the producer on just what he wanted on his program.

"We'd better get back now," I said, glancing at my watch. "Almost time to start." It was within a minute or two of seven-thirty.

"Run, or you'll get wet," he said, and I looked up.

The first few drops of rain from a cloud of ominous blackness plashed down as I ran across the drive. The drops were so large that the black spots which they made on the grey tarmac near my sandals, were each the size of an adequate hamburger.

I raced in, presented my first two V.I.P.'s to the announcer, found Bob at my elbow. "Look outside."

The rain had come down in one rush, not as if it fell in drops, but like water dashed from a bucket. The whole world outside the glass walls was shut off by falling grey. There came screams and the sound of running feet from the driveway, as people raced for shelter. They piled up under the overhang out front, blocking doorways, wet to the skin. It fell so heavily, one knew it could not keep up such a torrent. Then quick anxiety and apprehension. But, it could.

Down at the arena, chaos reigned. Most of the thousand at the buffet, having come on the train, had no transportation to the theatre. The whole flotilla of Stratford's taxis could not have handled

this. It is part of the evening to walk up the road to the theatre; and the rain struck just as many had started. They were completely soaked—imported fashions, special hair-dos, dinner clothes, and all. Every car stopped and filled up with people, but there were not enough cars. Those who were coming out of the arena through the one small exit crowded back on those behind.

Men ran for their cars to pick up their parties, and soon a hopeless knot was tied in the traffic. The rain was so thick that twenty feet away people were not recognizable. The police rushed every available man to untangle the jam. There were not enough. Cars were lined bumper to bumper all the way from the arena to the theatre, not moving.

Accidents began to happen. A woman's leg was crushed between two cars; another woman had a rib broken; up in the foyer, a man walked through a glass wall. Another man collapsed on a bench, in the first grip of an anginal attack. The St. John Ambulance men, always in attendance, had their hands full that night.

Ten to eight, five to eight. All through the backstage area, the five-minutes warning would have sounded: "Beginners, please." The instant, the second, toward which all discipline, all effort, had for ten weeks been pointed. "Ready?" No. Only a quarter of the audience were here.

Another hazard, which we had not thought of: the dressing-rooms are in the centre of the theatre; they have no outside view. The Company did not know it was raining; the Stage Manager was already in the prompt box, with no more view than theirs of the outside world. The actors who opened the act were already pacing about the backstage area, clearing throats, humming to test resonance.

A self-appointed messenger took this moment to race downstairs. "You might as well sit down awhile!" he told them. "We're not going up for half an hour yet."

Anger, fury, concern. Why? What was the matter? Taut nerves close to snapping. Upstairs, Michael Langham looked out his window, saw the traffic jam extending far down the river. He sent a messenger on the heels of the first; but his told the cast why.

The Company stopped dead. They had brought themselves to the instant; now, how to maintain that precise tension, with no release in acting; how to make this moment, for which they had waited ten

weeks, last half an hour more?

Eight-fifteen, eight-thirty, still only half of the audience here. I was answering questions, guiding, soothing, doing what I could; but half my mind and all my heart were backstage.

"We'd better go in," said Bob.

"There's no use. They can't start yet."

"Let's go in," said Bob, "before you explode." Odd. I was being so supernaturally calm.

Bill Needles sat behind us. He and I exchanged a glance; only a glance was needed. He and I both knew—he, an actor, far better than I—what was happening backstage. All around us, people were trying to settle down. Among them, a large group, the real social, business, and political leaders of the country, were demonstrating what their leadership was based upon. They were building up a wave of good sportsmanship which was breaking over, influencing, the others.

Most took it gaily, part of a wild adventure; there were giggles, high-pitched comments, lower talk. Most were determined to rise above this inconvenience; but, determined! And a determined audience is not a receptive audience. It cannot be.

"Why don't they get it up?"

"What?"

"The curtain!"

Bob looked at the curtainless stage, then round the auditorium. "But only half the audience is here."

"Yes, but the reviewers! The early curtain is so that they can catch their deadlines. Now they'll have to write at a blind speed."

Yes—and the reviewers, too, were wet!

At eight-forty-three, exactly forty-three minutes late, the aisle doors closed, the cannon boomed, "God Save the Queen" clashed out from the musicians' loft. Lou's exciting brasses set the mood for an exciting play.

The auditorium was plunged into a total black-out, and through the darkness came one note of the Festival's great bell; the bell with which we start every performance. Voices sang in the right ramp tunnel, the lights came up, and we had opened the Stratford Season, 1961.

The play was down. It was not completely off, but it lacked the sense of being utterly in rhythm. There was no rapport between the stage and the audience. The actors, trying to hold their tension for the extra minutes, had, a few of them, grown over tense. Right from the first line, one could feel the strong actors trying to pull it together, trying to reach the audience.

The rustling of programs was like wind through autumn leaves.

The other third of the audience arrived in dribbles and tiptoed soggily in. Each entrance brought whispered comments. They let them in only at scene breaks, but the result was that each scene had to stand alone. There was no continuity. Everyone looked around to see if the new gown entering was dripping; whispers ran the rows: "Is it still raining?" "Oh, my dear! Your hair!" "It's terribly silly, but we can't find Albert!" This, at every scene break. Then the actors onstage had to recall them to Rome. When the question rose later as to whether the costumes had obscured the Roman elements of the story, we gnashed our teeth, but said nothing. It was the dampened audience which had lost touch with Rome.

Yet, even with these difficulties, the play was taking over. Paul was working, if anything, too hard. He had turned on all the skill, and with it we lost a touch of the warmth and passion; but this was a night which needed skill. Somehow, the play did it. It cut through the rustles and coughing and noise. It came together, it began to be right.

For me, it happened on one cry, "Menenius, ever, ever!" which Paul delivered on a rising note. Onstage with him were Bob Goodier, Eleanor, Dougie C. and Michael Learned. They began to work as one. Eleanor had much to do with that reaction. Her tenseness in rehearsal was simple strength now.

We filed out for intermission. We could not tell if the play was getting over. The conversation all turned to the deluge. Outside it was now a bright and lovely night.

Act II is Paul's; and from the second that he strode on, I knew he had them. He crossed to the consular chair, sat, stood, tossed the eagle to Gary—and every move was clear, rhythmic and right. From there on, he was racing, he hadn't been better even the former night. The Company pulled to match his pace, they almost did it; and most of the audience went along with them.

At second intermission, a new panic started. The play would get out late; would the train wait? Should they leave early? People, wet, tired, grew fretful. Yes, we assured them, of course the train would wait. They doubted. The last act was fraught with waves of anxiety. All during the last two scenes, people were leaving; reviewers to write their copy, others anxious about the train. The death scene was played to footsteps tiptoeing up the aisles and flashes of light from opening aisle doors.

The applause was loud, sustained, but automatic. It didn't have the quality of spontaneous applause. There wasn't a thing which one was able to judge from it. Had the play done well or badly? Was the first-night jinx fulfilled?

In the corridor at the top of the aisle, we met with Ivan. He clutched my arm, just looked into my eyes, and I stared back. We didn't need to express our thoughts. We had no doubts of the play or of the players; but we didn't know how they had gone over this night.

A motion beside me, and I came back to the present. All of my mind was backstage, all thought in the weeks just past.

"This is Ivan Alderman," I started, and then looked up at Bob. He looked awfully nice. I don't know when I've seen him looking more attractive. I was especially fond of him just then. But—"I'm terribly sorry," I said, directly, "but you'll have to help me. I have forgotten your name."

"You *what?*" he demanded, his face brightening in delighted incredulity.

I looked more closely. The laugh was familiar. "Oh, yes, Bob!" I said, relieved. "Ivan, this is a friend, Bob Peel."

Ivan decided I'd picked him up in the crowd—no, Ivan's more observant!—but he reacted broadly, then made himself scarce. I collected what wits I had remaining. It was quite a chore.

"Let's go down to the car. You have to catch your train . . ."

"No."

"But I *want* to drive . . ."

"Joan!" The iridescent amusement was rising, he couldn't control it, but the voice stayed very firm and very clear. "Joan, don't trifle with the present. Don't give me a thought on this night. You are involved, be involved! Go backstage." He smiled. "I can catch

a train."

He's a nice guy, even if he did sign his next letter with a number. I flashed him a smile of appreciation, whirled, and bolted for the Aisle One door.

Backstage, all was a perfumed crush. Voices, congratulations, strangers. I took a couple of cameramen off Jack Karr's hands.

"What did you think?" Jack asked me softly, under shelter of the furore.

"I don't know. What did you?" We only exchanged the question. Nobody knew.

"Joan! Was it—?" Paul Scofield saw me passing and stepped from his dressing-room door. The crowd within were talking wild congratulation. "Was it—what you wanted and expected? Tell me true."

I'd always told him true. "It was—from intermission on. The last two acts," I said.

"Not the first one?"

I almost wavered, but—"No. The last two, for me," I said. I almost added, "I'm sorry," but didn't. One doesn't, to Paul.

"That's *interesting*!" Others grabbed his arm, his hand, to congratulate him. Past them, "You must tell me about it. Promise! Soon."

"Oh, how did you like your audience?" I called back.

"I loved them! Even in act one," he said.

The man's a saint. He should have wanted to drown them. No, come to think of it, that had already been attended to.

Upstairs, the reviewers were filing. Barb Reid, and Christine, Lillian and Michele from the office, were carrying coffee silently around to them. The place was a clatter of typewriters, rattling anxiously against deadline. From the offices came voices, as some reviewers phoned in copy. The teletype machines clicked steadily.

Nothing could be told from expressions. We knew what the play had done, for we had seen it; but not until tomorrow could we know if it had gone across.

The reviews were good.

The show had been too solid, the main performance too exultant,

to have missed. Most of those who had a sense of disappointment and needed to take it out on something used the change of period. But, the reviews were good. The best there have ever been for a first night—since and always excepting the very first night of all.

By Tuesday, we had begun to bounce back. The Company were quiet, preoccupied. After two days of alternating emotion, they had to hoard their reserves. They were remarkably reticent on all matters all Tuesday, and relatively quiet when going into *Henry VIII*. They went with considerable determination, however. There were to be no panics and no excuses holding over from last night's meteorological fiasco. The second the *Coriolanus* opening was over, they dropped it from their minds.

The corridors filled with flowers, the dressing-rooms with gifts, the mail boxes with telegrams, a second night. For the second time, the audience filed in; but this time, a different audience. No buffet supper before this one. Fewer in full dress, more come to see the play itself. The curtain went on the second. The play shot through faster than it had ever played before.

This time, the cast themselves could not tell how it was going. They came off stage inquiring of one another, "How is it?"

Kate came off in horror at her own performance, saying to George McCowan, "I can do better, George, I swear I can do better, and I will." But the audience were with her the whole way.

Doug Campbell never was better. Doug Rain added some sudden nuances to his scenes which surprised those onstage with him, and caught the audience. Jack Creley ceased overdoing his stillness, and touched on an inner truth in his acting which none of us had seen before.

The costumes caused a sensation. When the golden glow of the final scene swept onstage, the audience gasped, and applauded outright. The applause at the end was rich, warm, and direct. Rested reviewers came upstairs and started their reviews with that golden dazzle in their eyes!

For the second time, the reviews were good. Artistically, not nearly as good as those for *Coriolanus*; but, these were selling reviews.

Two down. Or rather, two up. And by Wednesday, a strange atmosphere floated through the theatre, backstage. Could we make

it three? The cast wore secret smiles of power and of knowledge; and very silently they went their way. Each year, there has been one play which has lost out. Each year, one has set reviewers crying, "Why did Stratford have to do this, this way?" So far, neither. Oh, isolated objections; but no trend. What did that mean for *Love's Labour*? Would it be lost this time?

We all felt the tremor of excitement. It was so close; and this was Michael's year. It was an open secret that this play was Michael's favourite, and although we didn't talk about it, we all knew what he had done this year. Yet, the third-night audience is always languid. After many parties, and two nights of theatre, they're not the easiest to entertain.

The atmosphere persisted. It was so strong that one could feel it, a sense of secret knowledge, flooding upward from the dressing-rooms below. Actors hummed as they came up to get their coffee; smiled, said "Hi!" and went their ways again.

For the third night, the flowers; for the third night, the wires; for the third night, the fanfares, as the audience came in.

Michael Langham stood in his office, thinking; and as the fanfares rang through his theatre, he did that which he has not done on a first night in the six years he has directed at Stratford. He turned and went out the door of his backstage kingdom, and took his place as audience, out front.

From the first second it glittered. From Leo's opening line, "Let Fame, that all hunt after in their lives . . .", it had a ring of brave excitement to it. All were acting together, all were sure. The sets of lovers, the rustics, the pedants, swept on and off, individually skilled, but part of a great melody. The audience sat rapt.

Don Armado came on, and collected his audience as he came. No chance of odd flurries this night. He played it so differently, so much more clearly than we had ever seen it, that even for us it was a new delight. That heart he puts into his playing, the warmth, all came across. At the end of his scenes, there occurred that rarest of phenomena in a theatre—the audience were leaning forward. All along the rows, one could see four, or five inches between backs and chairs; while hands, cupped together, were tensed, ready and eager to give response, yet withheld from interrupting. At the end of his first scene, the applause was an eruption, brief, loud, explosive,

raised by a master's touch.

The difficult play glittered, its dark shadows drew in softly, the last scene held viewers spellbound, there was a wild ebullience to the applause.

The second they had completed the first curtain call, I bolted, took the corridor at a run, and collected Toronto *Telegram* news photographer Jim Kennedy in the green-room. We turned and raced downstairs. As we left we could hear over the green-room intercom the clatter of applause for the second call, and Jack Hutt's shout of "Go!" to take them on again. As we ran down the stairs, the principals were racing off from that so violent curtain call; and in the dimness, as Jack called through the intercom, "House lights, please," a tall grey figure and a shimmering white one passed us, rushed to Paul's dressing-room. We'd been promised a picture if we could catch it quickly, and just as the door swung shut it struck my knuckles as I knocked.

"Oh, good. You're here. Then, quickly!" said Paul. Jim set his lens in one deft motion.

Joy was atremble, flushed, sparkling of eye, and too excited quite to look at anyone. Paul would not look at us, only at Joy. She glanced down at their locked hands for a moment; then, in one shimmering flash of eyes, she looked up at him, and Jim caught the moment. We said, "Thanks. It was wonderful!", backed out, and shut the door.

All around was turmoil, joyous turmoil. They all knew what they had done and why they had done it. It did not need much stating. They brought in their third hit, the third of Michael's year. And Michael stood in the midst of the uproar, oddly speechless—the commading Michael turned for this one moment mute with happiness.

Jim and I raced through the crowd. I'd promised speed, and speed we gave. Single of Leo, single of Doug Rain, single of John, across the hall for a single of Zoe. Crowds of people in her doorway! I cut through, they said, "Oh, pictures!", stood aside.

"Do you—" I couldn't get the "mind" out, for something bright and beautiful had flung itself on me. It was Zoe, in her last-act silks, atremble and flushed with excitement and the night. She clutched my arm, spoke softly, softly. "Was there enough of sugar?" She looked all spun sugar, then.

"There was enough of everything!" I said, and meant it. Some things are a joy to say. It had been a joke about sugar and spice, between us. Zoe has both in her. "Of everything—"

Down the hall again. Two with Tanya. One with Michael. I saw Joy coming from Paul's dressing-room. She was tripping past, a pretty princess, with pretty thoughts she would not raise her eyes to show.

"Mr. Langham, may we have a picture with Miss Parker?"

"Mr. Langham would like that," said Michael; not to us, to her.

"And so would I," Joy answered. They looked at one another, old friends, united now in new occasion shared.

"Would you like to have me kiss the lady?" asked Michael. "I am very willing."

"Yes, we would," I answered, instantly.

"I think I'd like that, too!" said Joy, and went on tiptoe, while Michael leaned to kiss her cheek.

Jim whispered in my ear, I interrupted. "Mr. Langham, I'm afraid your face is blocking Miss Parker's. Could you . . . ?"

"I'd be delighted," answered Mr. Langham. "Would the lady please to turn her other cheek?"

The lady would, and did so very sweetly.

"Thank you," I said.

"Thank you!" said Michael Langham.

"And thank you," said a demure princess. She drifted away from us, radiant, reserved, and utterly English; and all of us turned to watch her go.

I was brought back from consideration of strictly old-world virtues by seeing Mona Colicos come down the centre corridor. Mona, with her dark hair drawn back in one great braid which swings between her shoulders, looks like a madonna; but she is strictly of the newest of new worlds. "Have you another film?" I asked Jim, and we veered around to John's dressing-room door.

"Hi," said Mona casually, and "Hi," said John. Casual? They shared a joyous unity which no monosyllables could dim.

"May we have a picture of you together?"

"Like this?" demanded John, meaning his terry robe.

"Like that."

"Why, sure!" said John, and Mona nodded. He threw his arms

around her in a mighty bear hug, the two of them so happy that they gave off a glow.

Upstairs, typewriters were clacking, racing at the speed which means certainty, as the third set of reviews went out.

They did not matter to us, not on this night; this night, our part in three openings was over, all we wanted now was for the world to draw away. The Company below were dressing swiftly, shortening conversations, brushing admirers away. There was a sense of pressure, of private hurry, of wanting the outside world to go, to leave us on our own.

The Company began to rush past, headed for the rehearsal hall. Music burst forth from there, dance music, filling the theatre with sound. Tonight, three openings done, was the cast party. But "cast party" isn't just for the cast—not in Michael's theatre! It is for all who work there, Company, Office, Props, Wardrobe, Grounds. The lot! Three hundred of us and more, to celebrate a season, the season which Michael always let us know belonged to all. That's one of the gifts this slender man has for giving; not proud himself, he yet proffers pride to others.

The party swirled on, private, gay and happy. The buffet closed, the bar closed early, but the party went on late. When those with public talents turn those talents to their private entertainment, high spirits in themselves will carry them along.

It went on late, and later. This was our night, the theatre's night. We used it, till the dawn.

20....

TWO hundred and eighty-seven thousand and thirty-three people came to the Stratford Festival that ninth season.

Coriolanus, which was troubled early by the chill breeze which blew through its opening, recovered; and all season long it raised the loudest response. *Love's Labour's Lost* continued to show forth its sparkle. The box-office hit of the season? *Henry VIII*—what else? The Company play!

The Festival plunged into its other activities: operetta, concerts, Canadian play, art exhibits, handicraft exhibits, book exhibits, Shakespearean seminars, a film festival. The Company turned to extra classes, rehearsal, and understudy rehearsal. Those of us who came for the pre-season shook ourselves, and turned, and went our ways.

On Thursday morning I sat in the green-room, talking with Tanya. Michael came in. I've never seen him look more fit. He looked rested—though if so, it must have been an emotional rest. His colour was clear and healthy. The season had opened; and, Michael was well.

He stopped by the cigarette machine, picked up a package, then stood running his fingers over the buttons, as if they were piano keys. He was smiling.

Then, "I was talking to Helen," he said, not to us, but to the machine and the wall. "She's better. She's much better. She sounded wonderfully well on the phone. She will be able to fly over, soon."

"I am so glad," said Tanya softly. I just nodded. Beyond that, nothing. He had not spoken directly to us.

He sat down to join us, his chair turned aside to look out toward the office; just sat there, smoking, nothing much to say. Tanya read clippings from an overseas letter. I warmed my hand on a coffee cup, and relished the feel of the day.

Never before had I seen both Michael and Tanya with time to

spare. Now, there was a peace, a sense of relaxation—yes, and of achievement, which made it a special day.

We exchanged a word or two; nothing much. It needed few words.

"I have to take a two-week vacation, now that we've opened," said Michael.

He lit another cigarette, observed it in his hand with momentary interest, stirred restlessly, glanced around at Tanya as she tucked her letter away. He'd been there a quarter of an hour, long for him to linger in one place.

"Some time when you're free," he said to Tanya, "we might have a go at the stage." "The stage" meant the changes in it, being instituted for the tenth season. Tanya designed the original, and was working with him on this.

"I'm free now."

"Now? Good!"

He was out of his chair in a movement so sudden it startled, and unconsciously he accented the return to action with a brisk clap of his hands.

The two of them strolled off to his office together, talking, talking—sight lines, power, division, mobility, all the qualities which this director demands for his Company, and of his stage.

Michael's two-week vacation? Oh, he'd had it.

Fifteen minutes in the green-room was the lot.

That night, I went down to watch the first act of *Coriolanus* from backstage.

I settled on a high stool beside Jack Hutt's office door, a trim eyrie from which to watch the fracas. Armies raced in and out, the orchestra marched up and down, crowds gathered to shout offstage cheers, boos, laughter; there was utterly ordered chaos, very loud, and a fine sense of efficiency in control.

Paul strode on and off for his incredibly swift changes, came off-stage, head up, eager, each time that he exited from your sight; turned, went back onstage without a waste motion with no restless preparation, simply went.

He made final exit from the battle scenes, and crossed to his dressing-room. In a moment there would come the triumphal procession to herald his return from the wars, and soldiers, citizens,

orchestra were rushing down to get into position, there was a moving knot of people at the head of the underworld stairs.

I was completely intent on this, when a pair of gauntlets struck across my shoulder, and I turned.

Paul had given me a sharp slap with them. Tall, slender and stunning in his Coriolanus uniform, he stood there, his scarlet cape to his heels, the golden wreath on his high head, the fresh scar ablaze above his eye. The heavy stage make-up, the eye line, at this close range did nothing to disguise his features, but gave them an extra interest, highlighted the planes of his face.

"Well, now," he said, with another tap of the gauntlets, a quick flick of them, on my shoulder. "Well! We'll have to settle down to it, and give them a good season, won't we, Joan?"

I said, "They've had a good season started, already."

He looked out toward the stage, and, it being Paul, toward the audience beyond it, and said, "Yes. Yes, it is fun!"

It was more than fun, for him; it was his life. He looked eager to get onstage, but there was nothing slight about this eagerness. It had the attraction of all great powers, leashed. Let none be fooled by Paul Scofield's good nature backstage; it is not quiescent pleasantness. It is the happy balance of a born commander, of a leader, completely in charge of himself and of the job he does. He can speak to others, when he wishes, warmly, gaily, but only because he is in control of the situation; of the situation, of the audience, of himself.

"Are you staying through?" he asked me, from the forefront of his attention, the bulk of it being upon the voices from the stage.

"Just this act. I may go out front later."

"Oh, good! Good, I am glad. Do come back, and let me know how it goes!"

With no change of gesture, no hurry, and no hesitation he turned and strode off, and ran down the stair to the underworld. Two minutes later and twenty feet distant, he marched onstage as Coriolanus, the character in which Paul Scofield wanted to give the audience, every audience, the best that he could give.

I did not need to tell him how the show went. The audience were there, they told him! They cheered themselves hoarse at the final curtain; while Paul stood midstage, smiling, strangely shy.

Stratford's audiences don't cheer, not after opening nights; but

Paul did not know this. He'll never know it now; how could he? They cheered him, every night this year!

In the meantime, Stratford had done its bit to me.

One who admires my work, one who is an artist and who believes that I should be one, too, once said to me, in anger, "But, you won't commit yourself, Joan!" I accepted the sentence, because I know he knows me; but I didn't quite know what he meant about commitment to my work.

I learned, at *Love's Labour's* dress rehearsal; not what I ought to do, but that the deed was done.

Not that there was much of the mystical to the *L.L.L.* dress rehearsal. It had been all but delirious, and we were amused and distraught. Still, the last scene caught, rich with emotion; and even we, who so well knew it, paused to watch it as a play.

It was always effective, that final scene; but at the *Love's Labour's* dress I wasn't thinking of its effect. I was mostly aware that it signalled the end of the play. I had a job to do elsewhere, and stood, at the break of the song, to turn to go; and just as I stood, the moment came.

Turning, the whole view of the audience below was clear to me. Looking down at the bowl of the auditorium, with the balcony ringing it above, one had an eerie impression of looking down at the audience through glass. One could see them watching the play, intent upon it, but one felt in no way a part of them.

Onstage, the chorus was singing the final bittersweet songs of the play. The lovers had parted, for a year and a day, or forever? The worthies were quietly taking their way offstage. And just at that turn, as I caught that view of the audience, and above them, the theatre people watching—just then Paul, as Don Armado, reached the final words of the play.

"The words of Mercury," the beautiful voice intoned through the music, "are harsh, after the songs of Apollo." Then, one hand high in a gesture which only Paul could dare, "You that way; we this way." With the words, "You that way," the hand said farewell to the audience who soon must leave us; "we this way," and it tilted to the areas behind, the backstage area, where the artists must go.

The final chorus, with John Cook's beautiful music, swung up,

then drifted away. But I had paused in the balcony, memorizing! Or just recognizing. For the moment had struck at me through all my senses. It was not decision; it was recognition. "You that way; we this way." I knew at last to which group I belonged.

The winter song swung up, Michael turned to speak to Tanya, and below us, Paul wrapped his long cloak around him, and took his way offstage.

Upstairs, I turned and took the direction I would always take, from now on. I went backstage. No, not to the others, but beyond them, to the life and way which is my own. I went with no regrets, no doubts, no reservations. The line which can express all partings, had for me marked a something new begun.

Every minute at that theatre is adventure. They live there by making choices, daily choices: choices between emotions, choices between methods, choices between convictions, choices between themselves. There is a strength engendered in those who dare to make, and stand behind, such choices, a strength different from that met with in any other lives.

And all of those choices, and all of the effort, and all of the discipline is, as Michael has put it, toward nothing: a something which passes, unless it finds life in another life. Live theatre is the vital art, for it exists only through living. The artist has his canvas, the sculptor has his statue, the writer's book outlasts the act of writing; but live theatre is as bright and passing as a fire, as quickly done, with nothing remaining after—unless some vital spark from it has caught in another life.

This is the season and its people as I saw them.
One spark fell here.

